מה אשיב ליהוה

OR,

A Serious Enquiry

For a SUITABLE

RETURN,

FOR

Continued LIFE, in and after a Time of

Great Mortality,

BY A

WASTING PLAGUE:

(*ANNO* 1665.)

Answered in XIII. DIRECTIONS.

By THO. DOOLITEL.

Psal. 116. 8. *For thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling.*

9. *I will walk before the Lord in the Land of the living.*

14. *I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people.*

Isaiah 38. 18. *For the Grave cannot praise thee, Death cannot celebrate thee; they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy Truth.*

19. *The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day, &c.*

London, Printed by *R. I.* for *J. Johnson*, and are to be sold by *A. Brewster*, at the Three Bibles at the west end of St. *Paul's*, and *R. Boulter* at the Turks-head in *Cornhill*, 1666.

[redacted]

[redacted]

Chapple 33 St G[illegible]

Place London

Navy

Wm Fellows

Colnbrook

FRANK O. ROWLAND.

To ſuch whom the Lord hath kept alive in the time of ſo great Death by the Plague in the Land, eſpecially in the City of *London*.

THe deſign of theſe lines, is neither to commend the Author, nor the Book, which in theſe few following ſheets is preſented to your view; the former being as needleſs to them that know his Perſon, as the later to them that read his Directions; but I would commend the Subject (being ſo ſeaſonable) to your peruſal, and the Duties (being ſo neceſſary) to your Practice. It was the ſaying of

a Learned Divine, who had the honour of being made a Prisoner, as well as Minister of the Lord, That it was great pitty there were no more Prisoners of Jesus Christ, to write songs of his love: I will not say I could wish that more of our Citizens had in this late Dreadful Plague, remained in this, then Doleful place, which to the Countries seemed more formidable than a Prison; but I believe that many of you whose Calling and Duty did tye your hands and feet, and shut you up in the City; have found such sweet experiences of the goodness and love of God, that they will be recorded; And ---65. will be remembred by you with thankefulness so long as you live.

You have seen the Destroying Angel entering the City, and Death riding upon the Pale Horse Triumphant in the streets, Arrows flying, the sword

ſword bathed, Garments rouling in blood, and this grim Conqueror breaking in upon Houſes without reſiſtance, taking Captive, Men, Women and Children, and clapping them up in the Priſon of the Grave, where they muſt remain faſt bound in his chains of darkeneſs, untill the opening of the doors, by him who hath the keys of the Grave, who having Conquered Death himſelf, will at his appearance looſen the Bonds of all Deaths priſoners, that they may ſtand before his Judgement Seat, to receive their Final Dooms. In the midſt of which ſlaughter and Captivity, the Captain of your Salvation hath ſtood by you, held his ſhield over you; ſet his mark upon you, and given you ſingular experience of his Power and Goodneſs in your preſervation. You have been in a ſtorm, God hath ſhown you his wonders in

the Deep, and when so many Ships have been cast away before your eyes, and so many Persons have been devoured by the cruel Waters, and your selves inviron'd with waves on every side, yet the Lord hath kept you alive, like Jonah *in the Belly of the Sea, or made a way for you to pass through, when so many not onely* Egyptians, *but* Israelites *have been drowned; you have been in the water, but the Lord hath been an Arke about you: You have been in the fire like the three Children, but the Son of God hath walked with you, and suppressed the violence of the fire, that it hath not prevailed over you; you have been like the Bush which* Moses *saw burning, but was not burn't, because God was in it. And when you look back upon those dark days, and black Bills of Mortality, where you have had account of so ma-*

ny

ny thouſands dying for ſo many weeks together: Do you not wonder at your ſtrange eſcape? Do you not look upon your ſelves, as Brands pluckt out of the fire? And muſt you not acknowledge it is the Lords mercy you are not conſumed? You who have continued in the City in the time of the Plague, when ſuch throngs of people have been crouding out of this world daily into another, have had ſingular advantages of looking into and preparing for Eternity, which few think of with fixed ſeriouſneſs, till they be awakened by ſome dangerous ſickneſs, whereby withal they are uſually ſo weakened in body and ſpirit, that they are rendred unfit for ſuch cogitations; but to be in ſuch danger, whilſt in ſo good health, and in ſuch Leaſure from encumbring employments, I doubt not but it hath effectually moved many of

you to soar aloft in your thoughts and Meditations, that you might take a view of the other Country, which the Scripture doth set forth, of the City which hath foundations, whose builder and Maker is God. I believe the wicked have had dreadful apprehensions of the burning lake, of the Ocean of Gods wrath, which every day they were ready to launch forth into, and that however some have been hardened, and are as bad, yea worse than before; yet I hope others have been so awakened with this dreadful Providence, that they have been effectually perswaded to Repentance and Faith in Christ, who alone can deliver from the wrath which is to come; I believe that others have had deeper impressions of Eternity upon them, than ever they had in their lives, which the borders thereof, on which they have been walking have given

given them ſo near & frequent a proſpect of; and I doubt not but all of you have made vows and promiſes to the Lord of a Holy converſation, of leaving thoſe ſins your conſcience at that time upbraided you withal, and dedicating your lives to the Lord, if he would be pleaſed to ſpare your lives: Take heed of dropping aſleep again after you have been awakned; of returning again unto ſin after it hath been imbittered; of forgetting or abuſing Gods mercy after ſuch a wonderful preſervation; retain the ſame thoughts of ſins evil and the worlds vanity, of the worth of true Grace and Chriſts beauty; retain the impreſſions you had of Eternity, when you were ſo near it in your apprehenſions; hath God laid obligations upon you by his preſervations and deliverances? And have you laid obligations upon your ſelves by your purpoſes

poses and resolutions. Labor then to live up to your obligations, and if you be at a loss, what return to make to the Lord: You have by his Providence this little Book put into your hands to give you directions; receive them not as the bare counsel of man, but (so far as backt by the Scripture) as the Prescriptions of God, as if the Lord should speak to you from Heaven, and say, This is my will, these are your duties, and see that you perform them: Hereby you will both please the Lord, and rejoyce the heart of the Author, and him who is

Your servant in the Lord

Thomas Vincent.

The CONTENTS.

Pages.

The Preface or Introduction, 1, 2, 3.

DIRECTION I. p. 4.

Containing two parts, viz. Since you live after this Plague, Be not worse, but Better.

I. *The first part of this Direction containeth seven Questions,* 5.

Question I.

Whether wicked men wax worse and worse? 6.

Six things premised for Explication, 7,8,9,10,11.

Proved by { *Scripture Instances,* 12, to 17. / *Arguments,* 18, to 24.

Question II.

What are the several steps or gradations, whereby sin grows from a low ebbe to its highest ailings? Or, Ten Rounds in the sinners Ladder to Hell, 24, to 35.

Where, seven things about Gods hardening wicked mens hearts, 32, 33.

Question III.

Under what Dispensations wicked men wax worse and worse? 35.

Viz. 1. *Under Gods Providences, in Prosperity,* p.36,37, *in Adversity* 38. *in Deliverances,* 39 40,41,42,to 46.

2 *Under Ordinances, Word, Sacrament,* 47, 48.

Question IV.

Why God is pleased to remove Judgements, though many men are worse than they were before? 48, to 52.

Question

Question V.

What are the aggravations of this great Impiety, to be worse, after Gods sorest Judgments, than they were before?
Answered in Ten particulars, p. 52, to 59

Question VI.

What are signs of a man waxing worse and worse?
Answered in 14 particulars, 59, to 68
Where six restraints of sin, which keeping from sin do not prove truth of Grace, yet sin against, do prove height of sin, 63, 64, 65

Question VII.

What Considerations may be useful to stop the streams of such mens wickednesse that are waxing worse and worse? 68, 69, 70
Seven Questions to such sinners, 71, 72, 73, 74
Six Directions to such sinners, 75, 76
Eight Corollaries from this first part of this Direction, 77, 78

II. *The second part of the first Direction,*
Since you live, be better after this Judgement than you were before, directed especially to the godly, 79
Where, Ten Lessons to be learned by those in the City, that (by reason of the Plague) hath been a great House of Mourning, 80 to 89
Ten Aggravations of Gods Peoples sin, if they be worse in their spiritual condition after this Plague, than they were before, 90, 91, 92
Seven Positions, 93, &c.
Seventeen Arguments to Gods People to be better, 97. 101

DIRECTION II.

Since you live after this Plague, pay your Vows, and live up to your holy Purposes and Resolutions, which you made in time of danger, and fears of death, 102.-115

Where,

Where, Seven Reasons for care to keep your Resolutions, holy Purposes and Vows, p. 108
Twenty Helps to perform your Resolutions, holy Purposes and Vows, 115
Fourteen Aggravations if you come short of your Resolutions, holy Purposes and Vows, 116,&c.
Where, Eleven signs of a Beloved sin, ibid.

DIRECTION III.

Since you live, and are free from, or cured of your bodily sickness, look after the cure of soul-sickness; take heed that you lye not under spiritual Judgments, when temporal Judgment is removed, 142
1 *Sin is the souls sickness, in 6 particulars,* 143,144
2 *Spiritual Judgments are worse than temporal, in seven particulars,* 145--149
3 *How a man may know whether he be healed of Soul-sickness, in six particulars,* 149--152
4 *How a soul-sick sinner should do for healing, in 8 particulars,* 153
The excellency of Christ our Soul-Physician, in 5 particulars, 154,&c.
5 *What those must do whom Christ hath healed of soul-sickness, to improve this Cure to the glory of God, in 4 particulars,* 158,&c.

DIRECTION IV.

Since you live after this Plague, be eminently exemplary in the capacity God hath set you, 161
An humble Exhortation to Magistrates, whom God hath preserved, 162, 163,164
Subjects Duties to Magistrates in 6 particulars, 165,166
Ministers Duties whom God hath spared in this Plague, in 4 particulars, 167--175
Peoples Duties whom God hath continued to their Ministers, 176

Governours of Families Duties, whom God hath spared in this Plague, in respect of Family-Worship, p. 177

Where is shewed { 1 *Why, in 8 particulars,* 179, to 182
2 *Wherein, in 5 particulars,* 183—189
3 *How, in 4 particulars,* 190, 191

Duties of Husbands and Wives whom God hath continued together after this Plague, viz. *Mutual Love,* 192, 193

Where is shewed { *What manner of Love it must be,* 194 195
Why they should thus love, 196 197
Wherein they should manifest it, 198, 199

Duties of Parents whom God hath continued to Children, in 5 particulars, 200—206

Duties of Children, whom God hath continued to Parents, What, in 7 particulars: Why, in 6 particulars, 206—209

Duties of Masters and Servants { *In 5 particulars,* 210
In 11 particulars, 211—216

DIRECTION V.

Since you live by Gods secret way of preservation, { *Watch against secret sins,* / *Perform secret Duties,* / *Minde secret things in publick Duties,* } 217

Where, Fourteen Arguments against secret sins, 219—231
Nine masked sins detected 221, 222
Ten Preservatives against secret sins, 232, &c.
Four secret Duties, 235, 236
Six secret good things { *in Publique Duties,* 237, 238
Six secret sins } 239, 240

DIRECTION VI.

Since you live after this Plague, be dead to the World, 241
Viz. *To the Profits of the World,* 242, 243
To the Honours of the World, ibid.
To the Pleasures of the World, 245

To

To the Wisdom of the World, p.246
How a man may know, whether he be dead to the World, 247, 248, 249

DIRECTION VII.

Since you live, be dead to sin, and be buried with Christ, 250
Believers are buried in 3 respects, 251
Two differences in burial of our Friends, and of our Sins, 252
Five things included in the Burial of sin, 253, 254
Four things for Comfort to those who are buried with Christ, 255.

DIRECTION VIII.

Since you live after this Plague, walk in newnesse of life, 256
What newnesse of life doth not consist in, in 6 particulars, 257
What it doth consist in, in Ten particulars, 258
The Excellencies of a New Life, in 10 particulars. 261
The Hinderances of walking in Newness of Life, in six particulars, 264

DIRECTION IX.

Since you live after this Plague keep upon your heart a constant sense of Gods distinguishing Providence in preserving of you, 265
Six Helps so to doe, 267

DIRECTION X.

Since you live, and many of your Relations dead, love God so much the more by how much you have fewer Objects of your Love than you had before, 270

DIREC-

DIRECTION XI.

Since you live after this Plague, remember what Conſcience did condemn you for, in time of fear of death, and avoid it; what it did commend you for, and do it, 271

DIRECTION XII.

Since you live, after ſuch danger of death, truſt God for the future, 273
What this truſt is? 274
Eight Arguments to truſt in God, 275, 276, 277
Six ſpecial times for truſting in God, 278

DIRECTION XIII.

Since you live after this Plague, give thanks to God for your preſervation, 279
Three wayes how we muſt praiſe God for continued Life, 280
Twelve Motives to praiſe God for continued Life, 282, &c.
Six Helps to praiſe God for Continued Life, 288, &c.

DIREC-

DIRECTIONS how to live after a wasting PLAGUE.

QUESTION:

How should those that have been preserved by God from the Grave in this time of Plague, live in some measure Answerably to so great a Mercy?

THis is a Case of general concernment, to those many thousands whom God hath kept alive in a time of *Plague*, which hath swept so many thousands into their Graves, whose bodies are now rotting in the dust, and whose souls are entred into an unchangeable condition of happiness or misery, whose life is ended, whose time is past and gone, who are now receiving their wages or reward, according to what their state was found to be when the Plague removed them from time into eternity, from *this* World

into *that*, which now they must be in for ever, without alteration or redemption. What Family is there in this *great City*, or what person is there in all those families, that are not concerned to enquire what *signal* and more than ordinary return they should make to God for such signal and more than ordinary preservation from the gates of death: who have walked upon the very borders of the Grave, and are yet alive, who have been nearer the brink of Eternity, and in more danger of being cut down than at other times, and yet are spared; and are numbred amongst the living, and not reckoned nor made free amongst the dead.

It is the unquestionable and standing duty of all living to live to God, but there is a *superadded* Obligation upon all those whom God hath *marked* out for Life, when the *slaughtering Angel* was going from *Parish to Parish*, from house to house, to cut down those whom God had commissioned him to remove from hence. Oh! should you not consider with your self, what it *is* that God expecteth at mine hands? How would he have me for to live? and what would God have me to doe? What is the special work he hath reserved me for? Hath God layd the Corpses of thousands in the *Church-yards*, and yet given me a little respit to act for my precious soul, and for his glory? hath he reprieved me for a while, and am I not a living, walking Monument of his distinguishing Mercy, and unwearied Patience towards me? When others are dead, I live; when others must pray no

no more, hear no more, God giveth me time as yet to do both, and all other duties in order to my eternal peace. Thus should you reason your self into your duty, and to a diligent Inquiry, *What you should doe to live in some measure answerably to so great a Mercy.*

But *Reader*, wilt thou first resolve in the fear and presence of that God that hath redeemed thy life from death, to make a conscientious use of any helps and directions so to doe? wilt thou indeed engage thy heart (before thou readest any further) to use thy utmost diligence in practising and obeying what shall be from the Word of God discovered to thee to be thy duty? yea, in the Name of God I charge thee that thou doe it, as ever thou wouldest appear before the Barr of God with comfort, and give a good account of this his patience and Providence towards thee, and of these Lines which now thou readest, that neither the one nor the other rise up in Judgement against thee, as an aggravation of thy sin, nor for the greater condemnation of thy soul. What dost thou say? wilt thou promise, and accordingly obey, or wilt thou not? If not, better thou hadst dyed in time of Plague, and fallen with others into the same common grave, than to out-live the Plague, and not out-live thy sin, to live longer to adde unto thy sin, and in the day of Gods patience towards thee, to be heaping up wrath against the day of wrath, and the revelation of the righteous Judgement of God: but if thou wilt, I shall by *Gods assistance* proceed to resolve this

Important Caſe, in laying down theſe following Directions: which will alſo be of uſe to anſwer another Query, *viz.* How you may know whether God hath lengthened out your life in Mercy or in Judgement. If you live according to theſe following Rules, God hath ſpared you in mercy, if you live contrary to them, and dye ſo at laſt, I fear your eſcaping this Judgement will at laſt prove a Judgement to you. The firſt of theſe Directions will be more general, the reſt ſhall be more particular.

DIRECTION I.

HAth God ſpared you in time of Plague, *Then be better and not worſe than you were before.* Thoſe that before were bad, have now greater engagement to be good; and thoſe that were good before, are engaged by Gods merciful Providence to them to be better; not only better than thoſe that are bad, but better than themſelves that before were good. In time of Plague you did enquire for the *beſt Antidote*, and for the *beſt Cordial* and Preſervative, and ſhould you not now the Plague is thus ceaſed, enquire what is your *beſt Return* you are to make to God, eſpecially when in time of Plague, *Gods Protection was your beſt Preſervative, and the Spirits Comforts your chiefeſt Cordials.*

This

This Direction consisteth of two branches, and I will speak of them apart.

1 Be not worse than you were } Before the
2 Be better than you were } Plague begun.

And indeed if you be not better you will be worse, as afterwards will be made appear. Now because it is to be feared that some men will *be worse* after this dreadfull, and devouring, *man-eating* Judgement, than they were before, I shall more largely treat of this particular, if peradventure God may by these Lines prevent in some *so great* an evil after *so great* a Plague. Where I shall speak to these particular Questions.

The first part of the first Direction contains 7 Questions.

Q. 1. *Whether ungodly men doe oftentimes wax worse and worse, and why?*

Q. 2. *What are the several steps that men do take in sinfull wayes in their waxing worse and worse?*

Q. 3. *Under what Dispensations wicked men wax worse and worse?*

Q. 4. *Why God is pleased to remove Judgements, though many men are worse than they were before?*

Q. 5. *What are the Aggravations of this great Impiety to be worse after Gods sorest Judgement than they were before.*

Q. 6. *What are the signs of a man that waxeth worse and worse under all the Means that God doth use to make him better?*

Q. 7. *What considerations may be usefull to stop the stream of such mens wickedness, that yet are waxing worse and worse?*

Section I.

Question First. *Whether ungodly men do often times wax worse and worse?*

Some wax *richer*, and some wax *better*, and all men wax *older*, and many wax *worser*. 2 Tim. 3. 13. *But evil men and seducers wax worse and worse; deceiving and being deceived.* To encrease in Riches is not simply evil; to encrease in Grace is surely good. This increase is *commanded*: 2 Pet. 3. 18. *But grow in Grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.* It is *commended*, 1 Cor. 1. 5. *In every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance and in all knowledge.* It is to be prayed for, Luk. 17. 5. *Lord encrease our faith.* Col. 1. 9. *For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire you may be filled with the knowledge of his will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.* Vers. 10. *That ye may walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitfull in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God.* But to encrease in sin, and to grow in wickedness, especially after men have seen Gods displeasure against sin, in a *wasting Plague*, is an evil to be lamented, if we could, with tears of blood. When instead of adding *grace to grace*, 2 Pet. 1. 5, 6, 7. they adde *sin to sin*; to Drunkenness they add Adultery; to Passion Malice, to Malice Revenge. Some men make such progress in sin by little and little, till (as all the little Channels meeting in one place) become a *common Sewer* of all filthiness, and

and impiety; *Sinks* of sin and nasty *dunghils* of all uncleanness.

Let me premise these six particulars, and I will pass to the proof of this first thing,

Six things premised, for explication.

1. That the Nature of man is wonderfully depraved, and in all men (except Christ) equally sinfull. For

First, All men are equally under the guilt of *Adams* first transgression.

Secondly, All men are equally deprived of Originall righteousnesse.

Thirdly, All men have equally the seeds of all sin in their nature, all naturally prone to all sin, *Gen.* 6. 5. though by reason of the temperament of the body, some men might be more inclined to one sin than to another, yet all sin is *seminally* and *radically* in every mans nature, all men by nature are equally under the curse of the Law, deserve the wrath of God, and equally liable to the torments of hell, *Ephes.* 2. 3.

2. That every sin that men commit is of a damning nature, and though some sins in comparison of others might be called little sins, yet in respect of the great God against whom they are committed, no sin is small. Though degrees of sin, and inequality of sinning, have greater degrees of torment, and shall have inequality in sufferings, yet eternall death is the wages of the smallest sin. Therefore let no man think, while I speak of the increase of sin, that he is good, because he is not so bad as others grow to be.

3. That in the world there are severall sizes and degrees of sinners, as in the Church there are

severall sizes and degrees of believers.* In the Church there are, Fathers, Young men, Children, 1 *Joh.* 2. 13. And Babes, 1 *Pet.* 2. 1. So there are severall sizes of sinners. Some morall men, some openly prophane: some are great swearers and great drunkards, Ringleaders to sin; the Devils Lieverenants, provoking others to sin, and incouraging them therein. Some are chief among sinners, *Luk.* 19. 2. *Some drink in Iniquity like water.* Job 15. 16. Some are drawn to sin, and some draw sin to them, and that as with Cart-ropes, *Isa.* 5. 18. some commit sin, and tremble at it: and some commit sin and rejoyce at it. *Prov.* 2. 14. some commit sin, and are terrified at it when they have done it: some commit sin and make a mock and sport of sin, when they have done it, *Pro.* 10. 23. & 14. 9. some commit sin with great remorse and reluctance, and others commit sin with as great and eager greedines, *Eph.* 4. 18. 19. Adreadfull text, *Having the understanding darkned, being alienated from the Life of God, through the Ignorance that is in them, because of the blindnes of their heart*, vers. 19. *Who being past feeling, have given themselves over to lasciviousnes, to work all uncleanness with greediness.* These are sinners of a great Magnitude, if you weigh the things spoken of them (1) *Having their* * Διάνοια. *understandings darkned.** The word doth either signify the faculty it selfe, or the ratiocination, or

* *Pendet hæc* [*peccati*] *differentia graduum* (1) *A respectu personæ a qua admittitur.* (2) *A genere & natura rei,* (3) *Ab intensione & remissione actus.* (4) *ratione et modo patrandi.* (5) *A circumstantiis loci, temporis, &c.* Ames med. p. 65.

or reasoning of the understanding, and it is true in both respects, their understandings are dark and ignorant, and their reasonings are dark and obscure. (2) *Being alienated from the Life of God*, i. e. * That Life, that God commands and approveth, they are too much acquainted with a sensuall, flesh-pleasing, swinish life: but they are utter strangers to an holy, self-denying, sin-mortifying Life: because of the ignorance that is in them, as a bruit doth not know the life of reason, so sinners are ignorant of the Life of God. (3) *Because of the blindness*, (more properly) *the hardness of their heart*; πώρωσιν. This word is sometimes rendred blindness, sometimes hardness, because they are conjunct, a blind heart is a hard heart, and a hard heart is a blind heart; it signifieth the thick skin that covereth the palmes of the hands of hard labourers, that they can handle nettles, and in that part of their hand have no feeling of the stingings, as others are sensible of. There is a thick skin hath over grown the hearts of some sinners, that they are (4) *past* * *feeling*, unsensible as a stone, who are said to have their consciences seared as with an hot Iron. But though they feel not their sin here, they shall feel the torments due for sin in the life to come. The hideous howlings, and gnashings of teeth amongst the damned, speak plainly that they feel the punishment of sin. (5) *Have given themselves over to lasciviousness*, sometime sinners are said to sell themselves to work wickedness, as *Ahab*, 1 *King.* 21. 25. sometimes are said to give themselves to wickedness,

* Vitam Dei appellat, vitam illam qua deus vivit in suis: quamq; præcipitè approbat. Beza in loc.

* Ἀπηλγηκότες.

neſs, which denotes their conſtancy, and complacency in working wickedneſs, as when St. *Paul* commanded *Timothy* to give himſelf to reading, he ſaith, *Give thy ſelf wholly to them*, 1 Tim. 4. 15. ἐν τούτοις ἴσθι. *Be thou in theſe things*, a mans heart is in thoſe things he is given to, a Schollar that is given to his Book, a drunkard that is given to drinking, when his cup is in his hand, his heart is in the cup. *He is in drink* is our proverb, when the drink is in him. God and Chriſt ſhould dwell in their heart, but their heart is in their ſin, and ſin is in their heart. (6) *To* * *work*, They work at ſin as for gain, when it is the loſs of the ſoul, that will be the iſſue. Sin indeed is a hard labour, and greateſt drudgery: ſinners work and damnation will be their wages; they ſhould be working out their ſalvation; but they are working out their damnation, they are *Labouring* for hell, and taking pains to undoe themſelves; and what is it they are ſo much imployed in; (7) *In uncleanneſs*, in the extent and latitude of it, working all manner of uncleanneſs, and that (8) *with greedineſs*, or with * *covetouſneſs*. Wicked men are as eager after ſin, as a covetous man is after a good bargain, they are covetous to commit ſin. But *Beza*, renders it *Certatim*, contending and ſtriving who may ſin moſt, as if they could not get to damnation *ſoone* enough, or *ſure* enough.

* ἐργασία, *Is opera quæſtus.*

* ἐν πλεονεξίᾳ. i. e. *quaſi agatur de lucro ita ut alius alium ſuperare contendat.* Beza in loc.

4. That the reaſon why ſin doth not riſe to its height in all men, is not from themſelves but from God. It is God that ſets bounds to the Ocean of

of mens lusts that they should no *more* overflow. God in great measure by restraining grace dammeth up the fountain of sin, that it sendeth not forth so many streames as in others it doth. *Gen.* 20.6.---*for I also withheld thee from sinning against me, therefore suffered I thee not to touch her.* But some God giveth up unto their lusts, *Rom.* 1. 24, 26.

5. That men stand not at a stay, in virtue, or in vice, in holiness, or wickedness: If a man doth not increase in grace, likely he is decreasing, so if a man be not mending he is growing worse; like rotten things every day are worse and worse; more seared, if not softned; more resolved to sin if not reclaimed. Of good it is said, *Non progredi est regredi*, not to goe forward, is to go backward; of wicked, I say, *Non regredi est progredi*, not to go backward from sin, is to go forward in sin.

6. That wicked men might seem to mend in one thing, and waxe worse in another, and so they do not leave their wickedness, but only change it, as one that was a prodigall and licentious, turns to be niggardly and covetous.

Sect. II.

These things premised, I shall shew that oftentimes wicked men grow worse and worse; and therefore will appear that this advise is not unseasonable, after such a *thundring* voice of judgement, as *this Plague* hath been.

This

This will be manifest { From Scripture, By Arguments.

Scriptures shewing many wax worse. *Nemo repente fit turpissimus, sed sensim sine sensu.*

First, The Scriptures evidencing this, that men oftentimes grow worse, and are more wicked, are such as these, *Psal.* 1. 1. *Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners: nor sitteth in the seat of the scornfull.* In which Scripture there are *nine* words that set forth the progress of men in sinning; and their comming up to the height of wickedness *gradatim*.

Psal. 1. v. 1. opened.

Three respect { Sinfull Objects, { *Counsel.* *Way.* *Seat.*
Sinfull Actions, { *Walk.* *Stand.* *Sit.*
Sinfull Persons, { *Ungodly.* *Sinners.* *Scornfull.*

And every third of these includes the second, and the second includes the first, *non contra*, every scorner is a sinner, and every sinner is ungodly, but every ungodly person is not a sinner, *i. e.* κατ' ἐξοχήν, *emphatically*, as the word is sometimes used, *Luk.* 7. 37. *And behold a woman, in the City, that was a sinner*, i.e. a great and notorious sinner, and every such sinner is not scornfull. Sitting includeth [standeth] and doth suppose it, for a man must stand before he sits in a wicked way; and standing supposeth a man first to come into that way, or to that seat in which he sits, but not contrary, a wicked

wicked man may walk in that way in which he doth not ſtand, and he might ſtand in that way in which he doth not ſit, and ſo of the reſt. Now here obſerve *Davids climax* or gradation, ſetting forth the progreſſe of wicked men in ſinning. Firſt they walk, then they ſtand, next they ſit. Firſt they are ungodly, then they are great ſinners, next they are ſcornfull: For the fuller opening of this Scripture to ſee mens growth in ſin, I will review them.

Firſt, The *Objects*, about which wicked men are converſant, which were noted to be *three*,

1. *Counſel*, [a] Wicked men conſult how they may ſatisfy their luſts, they deliberate how they may get an opportunity to ſin. Thus the malicious man ſtudies revenge, and the Adulterer contrives ſecrecy, *Pſal.* 36. 4. *He deviſeth miſchief upon his bed*, and the Devil is near his pillow to be his counſellour.

[a] עֵצָה *Tamid quod conſultatur, quam quod conſilio efficitur.* Bith.

2. *Way*, [b] Manner of life is ſet out by way, in Scripture, mens practiſes are their way, a man that hath a good trade and thrives therein, we ſay, he is in a good way; and ſo the profeſſion, and ſerving of God in ſuch a manner is called a way, *Act.* 9. 2. ſo that a wicked man maketh ſin his profeſſion and trade. Thus the common drunkard by his daily wickedneſs profeſſeth himſelf a drunkard, that is his way.

[b] דֶּרֶךְ *Mos conſuetudo, ſtudium quæ ſunt quaſi viæ per quas incedunt, verſantur-que.* Bith.

3. *Seat*, By frequent commiſſion they ſettle themſelves on their lees, then fixe their abode in the houſe of ſin, They lye down and like ſwine wallow in their iniquity, *Pſal.* 36. 4. *He deviſeth miſchief upon his bed, he ſetteth himſelf in*

in a way that is not good: They first consult, then act, then settle in their sin.

Secondly, The *Actions* which were also *three*.

1. They walk, * they take delight in their sin as a man doth in a pleasant walk; and as the Devill (with whom they walk) in walking to and fro to tempt and devoure souls: a godly man might possibly *step* into a sinfull way, but a wicked man *walketh* therein.

* הָלַךְ *Ambulavit metaphoricè usurpatur de vita, moribus & actionibus.*

2. They *Stand*, Next they become obdurate and shamelesse in sin, they are not ashamed of their oathes, and drunkennesse, and open prophanations of the Sabbath; a godly man might *fall* into sin, but he doth not *stand* in it; he doth not persist in it, but wicked men will stand and justify themselves in wickednesse and plead for it.

3. They *Sit*, As men secure, will persevere in evil; a man that sits intends to stay, it being a gesture more remote from motion than standing is.

Thirdly, The *Persons*, and these likewise are *three*.

* *Nomen plurale absque singulari, ex conjugatione Pibel deductum, ideoque significationem intendit, ac Habitum denotat.* Bithner, *in* Psal.

1. The *Ungodly*, a man that sins and repents not is an Ungodly man, *Septuagint* ἀσεβὴς.

2. Then they are *Sinners*, i. e. notoriously wicked as was before shewed; חַטָּאִים * it signifieth habituall sinners.

3. Then they are *Scornfull*, will be scorners of reproofs, and scorners of the way of holinesse, and then are come to such height in sin, that *Solomon* forbids to reprove them as men scarce reclaimed, *Prov.* 9. 7, 8. לֵצִים which the *Septuagint*

tuagint translate λοιμῶν, *Pests*, *Plagues*. *Tertullus* the Orator called the Apostle *Paul*, λοιμὸν a *Pest*, a *Plague*, pestilent fellow, *Act.* 24. 5. but by the *Septuagint*, scornful sinners are λοιμοὶ, the pests of a place. Thus from this Scripture you have the progress men make in sin, accurately described by the *Psalmist*.

Thus *Cain* waxed worse and worse, and did grow in sin, *Gen.* 4.

1. He dealt hypocritically with God, *vers.* 4. He brought to God of the fruit of the ground, but kept back his heart. (2) He envyed his brother *Abel*, and the grace of God that appeared in him, 1 *Joh.* 3. 12. and he offered to God and persecuted his brother to death, *Gen.* 4. 8. (3) He lyeth before an all-knowing God, speaking falsly, *vers.* 9. (4) He flies in the face of God, as if God had charged him with that which was not his duty. *Am I my brothers keeper?* (5) He despaireth of mercy, *vers.* 13. *My punishment is greater than I can bear*, or, *My sin is greater than that it may be forgiven.* (6) He flyes from God, *vers.* 16. (7) He takes up with the pleasures and profits of the world without God, *vers.* 17. So *Cain* increased in wickedness.

So did *Ahab*, 1 *King.* 21.

1. He seeth *Naboths* Vineyard. (2) He doth covet it, and unlawfully desire that which was another mans, *vers.* 2. and would have bought that which *Naboth* had not a power to sell, because it was the Inheritance of his Fathers, *vers.* 3. and *Numb.* 36. 7. (3) He was discontent

at

at *Naboths* answer, though he gave him the Word of God as the reason of his denyal *ver.* 4. (4) He doth unfaithfully report the words of *Naboth*, as is usual with wicked men to doe, *vers.* 6. He leaves out the reason of *Naboths* denyal, *Because it was the Inheritance of his Fathers*, (5) He was guilty of *Naboths* death, suffering *Jezebel* to use his Seal to effect it, *vers.* 8. And *Elijah* the Prophet chargeth *Ahab* with his death, as being guilty of his blood, *vers.* 19. (6) He takes possession of that which was none of his own, and which he got with the shedding of innocent blood, contrary to the command of God, *Ezek.* 46. 18.

The like steps you might perceive in *Jezebels* sin, and if you trace her, you will find her step by step to come up to an height of sin.

1. She approves of *Ahabs* unlawfull desire, *vers.* 7. (2) She resolves to get by violence what *Ahab* did sinfully desire, *vers.* 7, 8. (3) She makes her husband guilty of blood by gaining his consent to that which he would not act with his own hand, *vers.* 8, 19. compared. (4) She draweth other men. and makes them partakers of her sin; the Elders and Nobles, *vers.* 8, 9. (5) She causeth two wicked men to take a false Oath against *Naboth*. (6) She suggesteth the Charge that should be brought against him, which was high and false, *ver.* 10. *Let them swear that Naboth did blaspheme God and the King*; when indeed *Naboth* did neither. (7) She prophanes Gods Ordinance, *she proclaimed a Fast*; she coloureth her wickedness with

with Religious pretenses. (8) She obtains the murder of *Naboth*, vers. 13. They stoned by *Jezebels* counsel an innocent man, to death. This was the growth and gradation of *Jezebels* wickedness, till it became monstrous great.

So *Judas* encreased in wickedness, and grew worse and worse.

(1) He was an hypocrite. (2) A Theise, *Joh.* 12. 4, 5, 6. (3) A traitour to his Lord. (4) He despaired of mercy. (5) He murdered himself.

The groweth of sin is intimated in that expression of the holy-Ghost, *Gen.* 15. 16. *The iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.* It was increasing, but their measure was not full, sin would increase *In infinitum*, but there is a measure that a swearer, or a drunkard, and all wicked men shall fill up, and then God will call them to an account, *Mat.* 23. 32. *Fill ye up then the measure of your Fathers.* Thus from the word of God I have shewn that wicked men do grow in sin, and wax oftentimes worse and worse.

Sect. III.

Secondly, ARguments drawn from Reason do evidence this, that wicked men are apt to grow in sin; I will take up with three only, least I be too large in this Direction. And they are taken,

First, *A natura peccati*, From the Nature of sin;

Arguments proving wicked men wax worse.

Secondly, *Ab impulsu Diaboli*, From the Instigation of the Divell.

Thirdly, *Ab absentia contrarii*, From the absence of that which should keep them from sinning more and more. *Removetur prohibens.*

From sin.

I. This appears from the Nature of sin that is predominant in ungodly men, that swayes, and Byasseth them in all their actions, and ruleth in them and exerciseth authority over them.

Sin disposeth the heart to sin.

1. *One sin doth incline and dispose the heart to sin again:* The first sin inclined all men to commit more, where grace is predominant, the heart is inclined to love God, and to obey God, the generall scope of such a mans life, and the bent and inclination of his heart is towards God and duty, to grow in grace, and become better and better. Now *Contrariorum contraria est ratio & natura.* Sin doth dispose the heart to sin, and to depart from God more and more, *Heb.* 3. 12. It makes the bent of the heart to Backslide further and further from God, *Hos.* 11. 7. It makes the heart set to do evill, *Eccles.* 8. 11. *The heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.* As *is the tide to the boate, so is sin to mans heart.*

Sin begets sin.

2. *Sin is of a multiplying nature*, as sin committed inclineth the heart to the iteration of the same sin, so one sin begets another, of another kind, as drunkennes and gluttony, begets lust: and malice, revenge; as one circle in the water multiplies to twenty, out of one root of a tree grow many armes, out of one arme, many branches

branches, out of every branch many twigs. From the same fountain proceed many streames, from the same body of the Sun, many Beames. So from one sin are many multiplied. So *Adams* first sin hath multiplied *Innumerably*.

3. *In wicked men there is a complication and a connexion of sins*, Sins thus multiplied are linked one to another; and are twisted together, as there is a chaine of graces in a godly man, that if you draw one link you move the whole chaine; when you exercise Faith upon a promise, (suppose) of eternall Life, this sets all his graces on exercise, as one wheele in a Watch moveth all the rest: Faith applying this promise, stirreth up love to God that made the promise, and hath prepared the thing promised, it inflames holy desires after it, & desires put on to diligent indeavours to obtain it; it begets a lively hope, which earnestly, yet patiently waiteth for the possession of it. So there is a concatenation of sin, therefore sin is compared to a body, in which all the members by sinewes and ligaments are knit together; that though all the members do not grow, to an equall quantity, but some are bigger, some lesse; yet all do proportionably grow; so though all sins in a wicked man are not of the same magnitude, but in some drunkennesse is greatest, in some pride, in some covetousnes, yet all sin is growing in them, and therefore must necessarily be worse and worse: as unbelief makes a sinner fearless of Gods threatnings, and fearlesnes makes him secure, and security hardneth his heart, and when his heart is hard, and his

Sin is linked to sin.

Rom. 6, 6.

Conſcience ſeared, he will be very bad.

Sin infects the ſinner.

4. *Sin is of an infectious nature*, an infectious diſeaſe doth not only ſpread unto others, as one man ſick of the Plague may infect a whole Pariſh, but getteth nearer and nearer to his heart, and ſeizeth upon his very vitals, that he waxeth ſicker and ſicker, and at laſt brings him to his grave: So one ſin doth not only infect others, as one drunkard inticeth another to the ſame ſin, but ſin encroacheth more into the ſinners heart and affections, and brings him more and more into bondage to it, and ſo makes him worſe and worſe, as a man that was wont to take a *cup too much*, at length is brought to frequent drunkenneſs, till at laſt it brings him to Hell and to damnation irrecoverably, where he is as bad as he can be.

Sin is unſatiable.

5. *Sin is of a craving and unſatiable nature*, therefore thoſe that would ſatisfie their Luſts, muſt needs in length of time be very bad. There are four things which are never ſatisfied, and never ſay, *It is enough*, Prov. 30. 15, 16. and ſin may make a fifth: For though a man drudge under ſin all his dayes, yet it thinks the Sinner hath not done enough for it. The Horſe-leech hath two daughters, crying, Give, give: ſuch a thing is ſin, that never leaves ſucking the *heart-blood* of the Sinner, till it hath ſucked him to death. *Sin cannot ceaſe to ask, and ſinners know not how to deny*; and they muſt be wicked indeed, that will be as wicked as ſin can make them.

I might run through the ſeveral kinds of ſin, and ſhew how they are never ſatisfied: The

Egyp-

Egyptians thought that the *Israelites* never made brick enough: and sin thinks the sinner never is enslaved enough, that he never doth obey enough; but I will briefly instance but in three.

First, *Covetousness* is unsatiable: it never saith, It is enough: It is not satisfied with having, nor in seeing what it hath, *Eccles.* 4. 8. and 5. 10. and therefore puts the Worldling to go drudge again. *Crescit amor nummi, &c.*

Secondly, *Revenge* is unsatiable. Malice never thinks it hath done enough, and therefore puts on the malicious to consult, to contrive, and never to be at rest till he hath been more injurious to the person that is the object of his malice.

Thirdly, *Lust and uncleanness* is unsatiable, and therefore such as are addicted to it, and would have it satisfied, must be very wicked, for they never do it. 2 *Pet.* 2. 14. Ὀφθαλμοὺς ἔχοντες μεστοὺς μοιχαλίδος, having eyes full of the Adultereſs, the very looks of their eye betrayes the lust of their heart; and it follows, And *cannot cease from sin*, therefore will proceed to great Impiety.

Oculi sunt in amore duces.

ἀκαταπαύστους ἁμαρτίας.

Sect. IV.

II. THat wicked men will grow in sin, appears from the instigation of the Devil, who is unweariedly diligent to tempt unto sin, and to adde one iniquity unto another: and that becauſe he rules in their hearts, and takes them

Satan.

captive at his pleasure, 2 Tim. 2. 26. *A man will be very wicked, that will sin as often as the Devil tempts.* A man is never so bad, but the Devil would have him to be worse; *Judas* was an hypocrite before, but yet Satan put it into his heart to be more vile, in betraying Christ, *Joh.* 13. 2. Satan tempting without, and sin inclining within, Satan never ceasing to tempt, and Sinners not knowing how to resist, will be growing (like the Crocodile from an Egge) to a stupendous magnitude.

Sect. V.

Absence of Grace.

III. THat wicked men will grow in sin, appears from the absence of that which should restrain them. If a man hath drunk in poyson, and hath no *Alexipharmacum*, or Antidote, his sickness will grow upon him. Wicked men want that which should preserve them from sin; as

1. *The Fear of God*: This is that which causeth a man to shun evil. *Job* 1. 1. *Job was a man fearing God, and eschewing evil.* Prov. 8. 13. *The fear of the Lord is to hate evil.* But where the fear of the Lord is not, there the floodgates are pulled up: If the Devil tempt a man that feareth not God to sport on the Lords day, he will do it; to omit Prayer, he will doe it; yea, if there were no Devil to tempt him, he would run on in sin. This is brought in as the cause of crying sins, *Rom.* 3. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18. Ma-

18. Many sins *there* are enumerated, and at the close of all is, *There is no fear of God before their eyes. Abraham* dared not to trust himself with a people that did not fear God, *Gen.* 20. 11. *Abraham said, Because I thought, surely the fear of God is not in this place, and they will slay me for my Wives sake.*

2. Wicked men want *serious Consideration*, that should keep them from being worse; they do not seriously consider of Death and Judgement, of the Wrath of God, of the Torments of Hell; nor of Gods Omniscience, that he alwayes sees them. Hos. 7. 2. *They consider not in their hearts, that I remember all their wickedness, now their own doings have beset them about, they are before my face*: Nor of his Omnipresence, that he is alwayes with them and by them; they consider not, If I sin, I shall lose my soul, and it will cost me bitter tears or bitter torments: They do not weigh in their serious thoughts, the greatness of their danger, the heavines of Gods wrath, nor the eternity of the miseries of another world. God complains of the want of Consideration as the great cause of the height of sin, *Isa.* 1. 2, 3, 4.

3. Wicked men want *a firm assent* to the verity of Gods Word, that they doe not verily believe the truth of Gods threatnings; but they have a secret hope that it shall goe well with them, whatever they doe, and whatever God saith. They hear of the evil of sin, and of the torments of Hell, but they feel nothing for the present, and fear nothing for the future, and

therefore goe on to adde drunkenneſs to thirſt, Deut. 29. 19, 20, 21. *And it come to paſſe when he heareth the words of this curſe, that he bleſs himſelf in his heart, ſaying I ſhall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of mine heart, to adde drunkenneſs to thirſt.* Verſ. 20. *The Lord will not ſpare him, but then the anger of the Lord, and his Jealouſie ſhall ſmoak againſt that man, and all the Curſes that are written in this book ſhall lie upon him, and the Lord ſhall blot out his Name from under Heaven.*

4. Wicked men want a *lively tender Conſcience*, which ſhould warn them that they ſin not, and accuſe them, and threaten them with damnation, if they doe. Many have cauterized Conſciences, 1 *Tim.* 4. 2. Where Conſcience is dead, or ſleepy, or ſeared, there iniquity will abound.

Sect. VI.

Queſtion Second. *What are the ſeveral ſteps and gradations whereby ſin growes from a low ebbe to its higheſt actings?*

THere are ten ſteps to the higheſt actings of ſin, five of which are common to good and bad, the other five proper to the wicked and ungodly. Many Hypocrites may goe half way with the godly in that which is good, but never (while ſuch) goe quite thorow. So too often a man that is godly goes half way with the wicked in ſinning, but never goes quite thorow

thorow with them in all the circumſtances of ſin, The rounds in the Sinners Ladder to hell are theſe ten:

10 rounds in the ſinners Ladder to hell.

1. Original Concupiſcence.
2. Temptation.
3. Inclination.
4. Conſent.
5. Action.
6. Cuſtome.
7. Habit.
8. Hardneſs contracted.
9. Hardneſs Judicial.
10. Conſummation or final Impenitence.

Of theſe briefly in their order.

I. *Natural Concupiſcence*, or the Vitiouſneſs of our Nature, which is in Infants, this is as the Tinder or the Gun-powder whereby our Natures are apt to take fire at the leaſt ſpark. This is a ſin, becauſe it is the abſence or privation of that rectitude which ought to be in our Nature; it is a fruit and puniſhment of *Adams* firſt ſin, and an immediate conſequent of the loſs of our Original Righteouſneſs. This is *fomes peccati*: like to that wherewith the fire is kindled or kept burning; called the Old Man, ſinful Sin, the body of Sin, ſin dwelling, Law of Members.

Natural Concupiſcence.

II. Then there is ſome *Temptation*, ſolicitation, ſuited to this corrupt Principle, either by the Devil or wicked men: or ſome Object preſented to a man that might ſtirre up and excite

Temptation.

cite this internal principle of Corruption in our hearts, and though all men have the seeds of all sin, yet Satan observing mens different constitutions hath different baits, (as men have several baits, for several fish) some he solliciteth to drunkenness, others to uncleanness, and others to covetousness: Where note, that Satan hath a wonderful advantage of us, which he had not in our first Parents before the first sin; for there was nothing in their hearts that was corrupt, and yet how did the Devils temptation together with the Object set before their eyes, prevail over them! What the warm Sun is to the stiff and frozen Serpent, it doth enliven it, and then it sendeth forth its venom, and useth its sting; that a Temptation, or an Object, propofed is, to our corrupt Natures. Some call this *Abstraction*, a drawing the minde off from good to evil.

Inclination.

III. Then there ariseth some *Inclination* in the soul, or an *hankering* of the heart after that sinful Object; an entring into a parley with the Devil, minding of the motion made by the Tempter, thinking further of the committing of the sin. This is called *Inescation*, (as the Fish delighteth to play with the bait) or *Vitiosus motus*, joyned with some titillation or delight of the heart therein. The first motions of the heart, that are *primo primi*, though they be involuntary, and before consent of will, and the judgement against them, yet *are* sins, (1) Because they are *motus* ἄτακτοι, disorderly motions

Jam 1.14. *is inticed,* δελεαζόμενος, the word signifieth *baiting*, as men doe bait for fishes,

ons of the heart; (2) Because they be forbidden by the Law of God, and (3) Hinder our love to God. Rom. 7. 7. 14, 15, 16, 17.

IV. Next is the *Compliance and consent* of the will, yielding to the temptation, and closing with the motion made concerning such an act upon such an Object. The Will as queen and commander in the soul, makes a decree to close with the temptation, and to close with and consent unto the solicitation to sin, upon the understandings mistake in its comparative judgement, apprehending and dictating to the will that to be good which indeed is evil, or the sensitive appetite moving the will by the mediation of the understanding, allureth it unto consent; and this is the *conception* of sin, Jam. 1. 14, 15. *But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust and entised, then when Lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin, &c.* Consent.

V. When the Will hath consented it layes a despotical or flat *Injunction* on the Members of the body to execute and proceed to action, and this is the actual commission of sin in the execution, in Imperate acts. Thus when *Judas* had consented to betray Christ, he goes forth and covenants with Christs crucifyers, and betrayes him. Thus the eye moveth to behold, and the hand to act that which the will consenteth to and commands. Thus far it is the unhappiness of the people of God in their state of imperfection, Action.

fection, to yield. *David* had a principle of corruption, then an Object propoſed, then wicked ſuggeſtions aroſe or were injected into his minde, then his will conſented, and then proceeded to the actual commiſſion of his after-bitterly-lamented ſin.

Iteration. VI. Then wicked men proceed to the frequent *Iteration* of the ſame ſin, till it becomes cuſtomary. A wicked man is drunk till it is his cuſtom to be ſo, and to ſwear till it becomes his cuſtom to do ſo. This is a great progreſs made in ſin, it is great growth, and ſuch will be hardly reclaimed. *Jer.* 13. 23. *Can the Æthiopian change his skin, or the Leopard his ſpots? then may you who are accuſtomed to do evil, learn to do well. Æthiopem lavare* is to labour in vain. Miniſters endeavour to reclaim men accuſtomed to ſwearing, and lying, and drunkenneſs, and they preach in vain, and ſtudy and pray in vain, as to any ſucceſs uſually upon ſuch mens hearts. It is the commendation of a man to be accuſtomed to a thing, if it be good, for a Chriſtian to ſay, it is his cuſtom to pray; and a Miniſter, it is his cuſtom to preach; though it is not good, that the one pray out of cuſtom, nor the other preach cuſtomarily: *To have it cuſtomary to perform holy duties is good, but to do them cuſtomarily is evil.* Thus it was Chriſts cuſtom, or he was wont to preach and teach the people. But it is an aggravation to be accuſtomed to a thing if it be evil, and if it be *groſs*, it is a ſign of a graceleſs perſon: Though ſome carnal men when

when reproved for their often swearing, say, I thought no harm, it is only a custom I have got, and I cannot leave it: A custom! why that is the aggravation and growth of thy wickedness, and thou dost as foolishly alledge that to extenuate thy sin, which indeed doth aggravate thy sin; as a Thief accused before the Judge for stealing should plead, it was his custom so to doe. Now sin is become the *profession* of the sinner, and he goes to his sin as customarily as an Artificer to his Shop or Work-house; but it is not the custom of Gods people to make a custom of committing gross sins. *David* did to the wounding of his soul *once* commit Adultery, but it was not his *Custome* so to doe. *Peter* at one time did deny his Lord, but it was not his custom so to do. It is not the custom of a gracious person *often* to *commit* the same grosse sin, but it is his custom *often* to *lament* a gross sin but *once* committed. Therefore if it be thy custom to commit grosse sins, and thou art wont to do so, thou art gone beyond the people of God in thy sinnings. Thy state is deplorable.

VII. Customary commission of sin begets an *Habit* in sinning; whereby the love of sin is more deeply radicated in the heart. Habits are got by frequent repeated acts, and doth adde a greater facility to act; and such as are customary sinners will soon be habitual Sinners, by frequent swearing they will have an habit of swearing; by frequent drunkennes they will acquire Habit.

acquire an habit of that sin, and what is habitual especially in evil things, is not easily lost.

Hardness contracted

VIII. Then Habitual commission of sin begets *contracted Hardness* of heart, and fearlessness of all Gods Judgements and threatnings; and contracted hardness added to natural hardness, is a great progress in sinning. * Thy Conscience is seared, thy heart hard as the nether millstone; past feeling. When *Pharaoh* hardened his heart, his sinning was great, *Exod.* 8. 15. Now thou stiffenest thy neck against all admonitions, *Act.* 7. 51. and hardenest thy heart against reproofs, *Prov.* 29. 1. Now thou actest as if thou wert above controul, and if thou couldst, wouldest shake off the very Sovereignty of God. *Exod* 5. 2. *And* Pharaoh (who was come up to the degree of hardness) *said, Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voyce, to let* Israel *goe? I know not the Lord, neither will I let* Israel *goe.* So hardened Sinners reply to Gods Ministers exhorting them to let their sins and lusts goe; saying (at least in their hearts) Who is the Lord, whose Name you use? we know not the Lord, neither will we let our sins goe, nor our pleasures and profits goe. Now thou sayest to the Lord, *Depart from me*, Job 21. 14. *My tongue is mine own, who is Lord over me?* Psal. 12. 4. Now thou glorieſt in thy wickedness that is thy shame, *Philip.* 3. 19. Thou rejoycest to doe evil, *Prov.* 2. 14. and makest a mock of Sin, *Prov.* 14. 9. and makest a sport in doing mischief, *Prov.* 10. 23. Oh if thou couldest

* *Peccata sive sint commissionis sive omissionis per multiplicationem diuturnam, in consuetudinem ducta & inveterata, pravum habitum gignunt, ac quasi callum obducunt voluntati simulac meuti.* Ames Med. p. 67.

couldest *vapour* it thus at the day of judgement, and make as light of torment as now thou dost of sin, if thou couldest *brave* it out thus before Christ at his comming, and *Ruffian* like, bid defiance to an almighty God, and angry judge, thy case were not so miserable, but thou canst not, alas, thou canst not doe it: Now thou art stout against the Lord, *Mal.* 3. 13. But then thou shalt sneake and crouch before him.

Hardnes judiciall.

IX. Then *Judiciall Hardnes* is added to contracted Hardnes, thou hast hardned thine own heart, and God will harden it also. Now when *Naturall*, *Contracted*, and *Judicial*, all meet in one mans heart, how hard must it needs be, and how great a sinner is this man in the sight of God? you read sometime, *Pharaoh* hardned his heart himself, *Exod.* 8. 15. and sometimes that God hardned *Pharaohs* heart also, *Exod.* 10. 20. So God giveth men up to their own hearts lusts which is a greater judgement, unspeakably greater than all bodily Plagues. Read *Rom.* 1. 21. to the end, *Psal.* 81. 11, 12. *Rev.* 22. 11. *Isa.* 6. 9. 10. *Hos.* 4. 14, 17.

But here conceive of God aright, when the Scripture saith God hardneth mens heart, it is not to be understood, as if God were the author of their sin. no more than the Sun can be the efficient cause of darkness, for how shall the chiefest good be the authour of the greatest evill. For

7 things about Gods hardning mens hearts.

1. God doth not infuse any wickedness into their hearts,

2. Nor

2. Nor doth God tempt them to sin, *James* 1. 13. he may try them, but not tempt them to sin.

3. God commands no man to sin, for Gods command would make it no sin, as in the case of *Abrahams* Sacrificing his Son, or the *Israelites* taking the Jewels and Ear-rings of the *Egyptians*: except such things as are *intrinsecally* evill, as are hating of God, and blaspheming of God, and these things God *cannot* command, as he is said that he *cannot* lye, *Tit.* 1. 2.

4. God with greatest severity forbids mens sins, he chargeth you upon pain of damnation, upon perill of Hell torments, that you sin not, but commands men to repent, and mourne for sin, therefore doth forbid them to be hard and stupid under sin.

5. Neither doth God co-operate, or concurre to the wickednes of their actions, though without derogation to Gods honour we may say, he doth concurre to their wicked actions, *For in him all live and move and have their beings*, Act. 17. 28. The action *materially* considered (as it is an action or motion) is good, and so God is the cause of it, but the action *formally* considered is evill, and so God is not the author of it, as when you spur a lame Horse, you are the cause that the Horse doth move, but you are not the cause of his halting.

Deus concurrit ad actum non ad malitiam actus.

6. But God doth permit and suffer men to harden themselves, he doth not give them preventing grace, but denieth that (which he is not bound to give) which would keep off this Hardnes

neſs from them. So God is ſaid to give men over to their own wicked hearts, to let them alone, and leave them to their luſts, *Rom.* 1. 24, 26. and to give them over to a Reprobate mind, 2 *Theſ.* 2. 10, 11. 12. But if ſome ſhould ſay, bare Divine permiſſion cannot be the reaſon why God ſhould be ſaid to harden mens hearts, no more than he would be ſaid to ſteal, becauſe he ſuffereth men ſo to doe. Some therefore adde,

7. That Hardneſs of heart may be conſidered either as a *ſin*, and ſo God is not the author of it, or as a *puniſhment*, and ſo it may be from * God, as the ſame thing in divers reſpects might be a *ſin*, and a *puniſhment* of former ſin, and a *cauſe* of future ſinning, ſo the ſame thing in divers reſpects might be from God, and from the creature: as *Abſaloms* Rebellion againſt the King was an hainous ſin, as from him, yet it was alſo a puniſhment of *Davids* ſins, 2 *Sam.* 16. 22. But the Scripture aſſerts two things however, (1) That with God dwels no evill, and he cannot be the cauſe of ſin, and yet

* *Excaecatio activa tribuitur Deo, Satanæ & homini ſcipſe a ſin, excæcanti; ſatanas & Homo in illa actione graviſſimè peccant, deus autem juſtiſſimè agit.*

Strangius, de volun. Dei circa peccatum. p. 819. *Modi notandi ſunt, quibus dicitur Deus indurare.* (1) *Quia Deus juſte deſerit eos, a quibus deſertus eſt, ſuumque auxilium ſubtrahit aut denegat, privatque eos donis ſuis, quibus illi perverſe abuſi ſunt, idem.* p. 814. (2) *viam eis aperit, objecta & occaſiones ſubminiſtrans, quibus illi flagitia exequantur, ut in perniciem ſuam ruant.* 826. (3) *Offert, confert, aut facit ea quæ ſua natura hominem ad bonum converterent, atque ad illuſtrandum, & emollieandum valerent, ſed abutentium vitio fit, ut magis obdurentur.* p. 827. (4) *flagella. flagellorum remotio, adverſa, impiorum indurationem promovent, iisque pulſati inſter incudis ſub malleo magis indureſcunt.* p. 818.

(2) expreſſely ſaith, that the Lord hardned *Pharaohs* heart *Exod.* 10. 20. Though we know not the manner, that doth not leſſen the dreadfullneſs of the judgement, but when God doth judicially harden, then men are almoſt ripe in ſin and for hell.

Finall impenitence.

X. When God hath judicially hardned them, they let *looſe the reignes* of their luſts and now are fit for any wickedneſs, and ſtop not at the moſt abominable and loathſome practiſes. Now they can blaſpheme, and mock God, and deride holineſs, and act like incarnate Devils, when the people in *Act.* 14. 8. 11. ſaw the wonderfull works wrought by the Apoſtles; they ſaid, *The gods are come down to us in the likeneſs of men*, but when we ſee the moſt abominable, and foridid practiſes of wicked men, might we not ſay, *the devills are come up to us in the likeneſs of men?* When men are judicially hardened they will commit ſins againſt nature, *Rom.* 1. 24, 26. &c. And could wiſh there were no God; nay now they are (when they have given themſelves over to work wickedneſs, and God hath given them over too, when they ſay, we will be filthy, and God ſay, you ſhall be filthy) eager and greedy after ſin, they weary themſelves in committing iniquity, and yet are not weary of iniquity, and do even ſcorne at threatnings, and mock at judgements, 2 *Pet.* 3. 3, 4. *Men walking after their own luſts, ſay, where is the Promiſe of his coming, for ſince the fathers fell aſleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.* Iſ. 5. 19.

That

That say, let him make speed, and hasten his work, that we may see it: and let the counsell of the holy one of Israel draw nigh, and come, that we may know it. Thus sinning with judiciall hardnes, and dying in finall impenitency, are at the bottom round, from whence they step into endless misery.

Thus you see how great a matter a little fire kindleth; and from how small beginnings some have proceeded to the very pitch and height of sin, that can scarce be worse (save in the frequent iteration of the sins, that they commit) for they have got into all kinds of sin, they are guilty of spirituall wickednes, which the devill is, malice, enmity against God and goodnes, *&c.* and of corporall wickednes, as Adultery, Drunkennes, Gluttony, *&c.* Which the Devill is not capable of committing, the Devill being only a spirit, but men consist of body and spirit, and so may commit more sins for kind, than the Devill himself can do. But *God forbid* that after such a judgement, amongst us should be found such sinners, this will be an evil requitall to the Lord for his removing his sore judgement from us.

Sect. VII.

Under what dispensations do wicked men grow worse and worse? Question Third.

IN the generall I answer, wicked men are the worse in all conditions that God puts them into: more particularly they are worse and worse,

Under { Gods Providences, / Gods Ordinances.

First, Wicked men wax worse under all Gods Providences, whether

Of { Prosperity, / Adversity, / Deliverances,

Prosperity makes the wicked worse.

I. Ungodly men are worse under their prosperity, when the world smiles upon them, and when they have all that their carnall hearts can wish and desire: If the Sun shine, it hardens the clay, and the more it makes the dunghill send forth unsavory smels, *Rom.*2.4. *Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance, and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance*, ver. 5. *But after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgement of God.* A wicked man is more hardened by Gods kindness to him; *Animus Iniquus beneficio fit pejor.* A wicked heart is made worse by every kindness. As, Christ fed *Judas* at his table, and he runs presently to betray him. The more God aboundeth to them in common goodness, the more they abound against God in multiplied wickedness. *Neh.*9.16. ad 27. *Psal.* 78. 12,17. *Prov.* 1. 32. *The prosperity of fools shall destroy them*, Isa. 26. 10. *Let favor be shewed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness: in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the Lord.* They are worse by prosperity.

1. Because they are *thereby lifted up with pride and*

and carnall confidense; many men the more rich, the more proud, and the prouder, the worser; the more their riches increase, the more they set their hearts upon them, and the more a mans heart is upon the creature, the worse he is. Prosperity is full of snares; and we are apt then to forget God, and to lift up the heel against him. *Deut.* 32. 15. *But Jesurun waxed fat and kicked, thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatness; then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his Salvation.* Here is great prosperity, and great impiety; and God seeing how apt his own people are to be worse by prosperity, doth caution them largely against it, *Deut.* 8. 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 17, 18.

2. Wicked men are worse by prosperity, because *then they have more fuell to feed their lusts. Sodomites* had fulness of bread, and that did feed their uncleanness. They turn Gods grace into wantonness, and his mercies into fuell for their wickedness. Those things which should be cords of love to draw them to God, they turn to the nourishment of their sinnes against God, and desire riches not that they may glorify God, but gratify their lusts, *Jam.* 4. 3. The more abundance of outward things a drunkard hath, the more he is able to please his palate with great abundance of the richest Wines; the more the adulterer hath, the more he bestows upon his harlot: and so the greater plenty, the more they lead a sensuall, bruitish, flesh-pleasing life, and the more of that, the worse they be.

3. Wicked men in prosperity are the worse, because *they are apt to gather Gods special love to them, from the common bounty he bestowes upon them.* Because the world smiles upon them, they think God doth so too: Because Gods hand is opened to them, therefore they think they are engraven upon his heart, and think Divine Toleration * is Divine Approbation, when indeed it is a sign of Gods great displeasure, to give prosperity to a man in a sinfull course. God was angry with the rich man in the Gospel, when he gave him more abundance than he knew how to bestow, *Luk.* 12. 18, 19, 20. and 16. 19, 20. They are apt to think that is the best way, which is the most prosperous way, *Jer.* 44. 17. *But we will certainly doe whatsoever thing goeth forth out of our own mouth, to burn Incense to the Queen of heaven, and to pour out drink-Offerings unto her, as we have done, we, and our Fathers, our Kings and our Princes, in the Cityes of* Judah, *and in the streets of* Jerusalem, *for then had we plenty of Victuals, and were well, and saw no evil*: Vers. 18. *But since we left off to burn Incense to the Queen of Heaven, and to pour out drink Offerings unto her, we have wanted all things, and have been consumed by the sword and by the famine.* By prosperity they take encouragement to proceed in their Iniquity.

* Psal. 50. 18, 19, 20, 21.

4. Wicked men by prosperity are worse, because, *they are apt to put far from them the evil day, and the hour and thoughts of Death and Judgement, and the Life to come*: In health they have not serious thoughts of sickness; a wicked

wicked man is too apt to think that the Sun of Prosperity which shines upon him, will never set, nor be clouded. Psal. 49. 11. *Their inward thought is, that their houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling places to all generations: they call their Lands after their own Names.* In Prosperity they think little of death. Luk. 12. 19. *And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast goods laid up for many years, eat, drink, and be merry.* They promise themselves a continuance of their outward happiness, and so sin more freely and abundantly. *Isa.* 56. 12. *Come ye, say they, I will fetch Wine, and we will fill our selves with strong drink, and to morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant.* This perswasion begets carnal security, and the more secure, still the worse.

Sect. VIII.

II. Wicked men are often times worse under *adversity, judgements and afflictions that do befall them,* the more they are punished, the more they are hardened; there is nothing in adversity and judgements, in sickness and plagues, in poverty and distress, to make an alteration or a change in the heart of a sinner from worse to better, except God sanctifie it. The *Plague upon the body* is not a remedy in it self to cure the *Plague of the heart,* for men love more the plague of their hearts than they loathe the plague of the body. Possibly outward Judge-

Adversity makes wicked men worse.

ments may put a ſtop to ſome mens ſinnings for the preſent, but they will return to them afterwards, except God ſpeak effectually to their hearts and conſciences, as well as lay his heavy ſtroaks upon the body. Judgement to a ſinner may be as a Barre to a Thief, it may ſtop him from the preſent act, but doth not change his heart; or as a ſtorm to a Mariner, may make him caſt Anchour for the preſent, but ſtill he retains his purpoſe of ſayling in his Voyage when the ſtorm is over; they are oftner *ſalve* for their eyes to ſhew them their ſin, than *phyſick* for their hearts to purge them out; ſinners in Judgements might *declaim* againſt their ſin, but without a ſetled purpoſe in their hearts to *decline* their ſin; where there is Grace, Afflictions work *patience* and ſubmiſſion; but where there is nothing but corruption, they often work *paſſion*, and repining, not Repentance; the more God ſent his Judgements and his Plagues upon *Pharaoh* and the *Egyptians*, the more they hardened themſelves againſt God and his people; and by Gods Judgements were not the better but the worſe, *Exod.* 7. 19. to 23. *Iſa.* 1. 5. *Why ſhould ye be ſmitten any more, ye will revolt more and more.* Pſal. 78. 30. *They were not eſtranged from their Luſts, but while their meat was in their mouths,* v. 31. *the wrath of God came upon them, and ſlew the fatteſt of them.* V. 32. *For all this they ſinned ſtill, and believed not for his wondrous works.* And as it was with the woman that had an Iſſue of blood twelve years, in reſpect of her bodily diſtemper, after great

coſt

cost and charge and use of means, she was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse, *Mar.* 5. 25, 26. so under Gods Judgements it is with most wicked men, in respect of their spiritual state, they are nothing bettered, but rather grow worse. And this appears,

First, Because in time of Judgment they are *not separated from their dross.* Ezek. 24. 13. *In thy filthiness is lewdness: because I have purged thee* (i.e. God used purging Judgments) *and thou wast not purged, thou shalt not be purged from thy filthiness any more, till I have caused my fury to rest upon thee.* God hath been purging our houses, but many have not been purging their hearts, but retain their heart-filthiness still, and their life-wickedness still: If God in Judgement say to such, You shall not be purged; their case is irrecoverably miserable.

Secondly, Because they are *not more serious in Religion* than they were before; either they omit it wholly as before, or are as dull and formal as they were before.

Thirdly, Because they are *not brought nearer unto God*, but are rather removed (were it possible) at a further distance from God than before. And the Reasons of this are,

1. Because, When Gods hand is lifted up, they will not see, *Isa.* 26. 11. they look more to second Causes than to God.

2. Because they search not after the sins that provoked God to so great indignation.

3. Because, if they do see their drunkenness and whoredoms, and Sabbath-breaking, yet they will not be humbled for them, nor forsake them.

SECT.

Sect. IX.

Deliverances make wicked men worse.

III. Wicked men are oftentimes worse *by Gods delivering them from Judgements and calamitous distresses.* Take a wicked man upon his sick bed, when God is shaking him over the Grave, and threatning him with death, and affrighting him with the terrours of Hell, you shall hear him acknowledge his sin, confessing his drunkenness, his neglect of his soul, and you shall hear him, it may be, with tears in his eyes promising, if God will raise him from his sickness, and trust him with life and time a little longer, he will forsake his wicked company, and prophane the Sabbath no more; If God will but try me (saith the sick, dying man) how will I live, and what will I doe, and how obedient will I be to the Commands of God: And when God answereth his desires in his restoration, he performeth not his Promise in his reformation, but is more wicked and more vile than before. You might see this in *Pharaoh*, when the Plagues were upon him, Oh then send for *Moses*, and let him entreat the Lord for me, and then I will let *Israel* goe: then he confesseth, *I and my people have sinned, but the Lord is righteous.* Though many wicked men, will not acknowledge nor confess their sin in times of Judgement, so much as an hardened *Pharaoh* did. But yet when the Plagues were removed he hardened himself more against God still. Read *Exod.* 8. 8. 15. 24. 28. 32.

and

and 9. 23. 27. So *Nehem.* 9. 27, 28, 29, 30. And the Reaſons are,

1. Becauſe after Judgements removed, they are more ſecure, and think the bitterneſs of death is paſt.

2. Becauſe they break their promiſes made to God in time of Judgements, and ſo their ſin is greater, and their guilt is greater, and therefore they the worſer, of this more under another Direction.

3. Becauſe Judgement is removed from them before they are purged from their ſin. When the Plaiſter is taken off before the ſore is healed, it will be worſe: the courſe of phyſick is not continued, till the vitious humours are diſperſed and purged away; but Gods people deſire the cure may be wrought, before the Affliction be removed. But *Pharaoh* was for the removing of the Plagues, but not the hardneſs of his heart.

4. Becauſe they adde Incorrigibleneſs unto all their former ſins, and muſt anſwer for all thoſe Judgements that were loſt upon them. Wicked men ſhall not only anſwer for their Mercies, but for the Judgements God ſent upon them to reclaim them; Sinner, God ſent the Plague into thy houſe, and then he looked thou ſhouldeſt have haſtened to have thrown ſin out of thy heart; but thou haſt not done it: God did caſt thee upon a bed of ſickneſs, but thy bed of ſickneſs was not to thee a bed of ſorrow for thy ſin, thou howledſt, and cryedſt out of thy loathſom running-ſores, but not of thy filthy

heart-

heart, and more loathſome ſins; thy body was pained, but thy heart not broken; thou haſt been puniſhed and delivered, but art not reformed: but know, the more thou haſt ſinned, and the more thou haſt been puniſhed here, and yet ſin ſtill, the more ſhalt thou be tormented in hell. For theſe thou ſhouldeſt look upon as means, which God doth uſe to bring thee to himſelf, and the more means thou hardeneſt thy ſelf againſt, the more is thy ſin, and the more ſhal be thy miſery.

Thus wicked men are oftentimes the worſe by Gods Providences. But if this be thy caſe that *readeſt* theſe Lines, that waſt a drunkard before, and wilt be drunk more frequently now; that waſt a lukewarm Formaliſt before the Plague begun, but now thou art quite cold in the matters of Religion; I charge thee in the Name and fear of the *Eternal* God, that thou preſently bethink thy ſelf, what an aggravation this will be of thy continued and increaſed wickedneſs, and that thou turn from it, leaſt God turn thy body into the grave by ſome other diſtemper, as an Ague, or Feaver, or Conſumption, though he did not by the Plague. Oh think with thy ſelf, God hath taken away ſome of thy ſinful Companions, that were wont to be drunk and ſwear with thee, who if God ſhould bring them back again from the dead, would tell thee that they are damned for their Drunkenneſs, and that they have been in Hell among Devils, and have felt the wrath of God to be heavy and intolerable, for thoſe very ſins they have committed in thy company, and thou with them: Would not they tell thee,

thee, if they had thy time, they would pray, but swear prophanely no more, if God had suffered them to out-live the Plague; or would after death and tryal of the torments of Hell, entrust them with life again, they would be better. Remember, some of them that the other day were drinking unto drunkenness in the Ale-house, dying in final impenitency, are now damned with the Devils; that some of them that the other day thou hadst by the hand, and drunkest unto in the Tavern, and did sing and roar together at your Cups, are now howling and roaring amongst the damned, and are scorched in those flames, and rowling in that Lake of brimstone, where there shall be no mercy, no mitigation, no cessation of their torments: And know thou, *whoever* thou art, that if thou dost not speedily return to God, if thou dost not mend thy life, and that *quickly* too, if thou dost not repent and reform, and that *quickly* too, thou shalt be a companion with them in torments, with whom thou wast companion in sinning: It was but a few dayes *since*, that they were with thee upon the earth, and if thou art not changed, it will be but a few dayes *hence*, and thou shalt be with them in Hell, and when thou art there remember, once thou readest such lines that told thee so. Therefore, if thou art not resolved for Hell, be perswaded to be better after such an awakening Judgement; if thou valuest thy soul, if thou hast any fear of Hell and Wrath yet left in thee, let it work to a speedy Reformation. Tell me, what if God had set thee in some place, when five, six, seven

thou-

thousand dyed in a Week of the dreadful Plague (amongst whom no doubt but many went to Heaven, and are now viewing the Son of God, *&c.*) that thou mightest have seen, impenitent Drunkards, and impenitent Worldlings, and impenitent Swearers, seized upon by Devils, and carried into torments, gone crouding in at the broad gate into pains eternal and unspeakable, and couldst but have heard their words, or perceive their apprehensions of their manner of life upon the earth, how would this have affected thee? after such a sight as this what wouldst thou doe? Be drunk still? wouldst thou be a Swearer and a Worldling still? a Formalist and Hypocrite still? then, if thou wilt be damned, goe on, who can help it? But rather return, repent, that thou mightest have everlasting cause to admire God, that thou dyedst not in this Plague, till thou repentest of thy sin, and wast prepared for another World.

Sect. X.

Wicked men are worse,

Secondly, Wicked men will be worse under the dispensations of Gods Ordinances. But here I shall be the shorter, because it hath been the Providence of God in the late Plague that hath moved me to this work, to which I would have my words have more immediate reference. Many wicked men are oftentimes the worse

By the Word.

1. For the Word of God and the preaching there-

thereof: Not that there is any thing in the Word to make men so, but it is * *accidental* to the Word; it may be *occasioned* by the Word, but *caused* by their own corruptions. Ministers might preach till they waste their strength, and yet they will be Whoremongers and Adulterers still, they will be envious and malicious still. The same Sun that softens the Wax, doth harden the Clay: *Obed-Edom* was blessed for the Ark of God, but the *Philistines* were cursed for it. Ungodly men suck poyson from the sweet Flowers of Gods Word, which yields nourishment to the souls of Gods people. Weak eyes are the sorer if they look upon the Sun. Naturalists observe, that the fragrancy of precious Oyntments is wholsom for the Dove, but it kills the Beetle; and that Vultures are killed with the Oyl of Roses. And St. *Paul*, that the Word *is to some, the savour of life unto life, and to others, the savour of death unto death*, 2 Cor. 2. 16, 17.

* *Scien-dum est, Evangeli-um non perimere quinquam, sed evan-gelii con-temptum.* Bez. in 2 Cor. 2. 16.

2. For the Sacrament of the Lords Supper. That which is to Believers, *Calix Vitæ*, a cup of Life, is to Unbelievers *Calix Mortis*, a cup of Death. Wicked men call good evil, so they turn that which is good in it self, to be evil unto them. *Donum male utentibus nocet.* Good becomes evil to those that use it not aright. St. *Paul*, treating of the Sacrament sayes, *Ye come together not for the better, but for the worse*, 1 Cor. 11. 17. The red Sea saved the *Israelites*, but drowned the *Egyptians*. And the reason why the Devil maketh drunkards and profane swearers so eager after this Sacrament (as our first Parents

By the Sacrament. *Grande id nefas, quando remedium, non modo, non prosit egro sed in venenum vertitur.* Par. in 1 Cor. 11.

Parents after the forbidden Fruit) is, becauſe he knowes it will do them harm, not good; as a bad ſtomach full of crudities turn the food received not into the nouriſhment of the body, but for the feeding of their humours. As a mans Sea-ſickneſs is occaſioned by the waves, but the foulneſs of his ſtomach is the cauſe thereof. They muſt needs be worſe, For (1) the Devil takes fuller poſſeſſion of their hearts: When *Judas* had eaten the ſop, the Devil entred into him; that's a *fatal morſel*, when the Devil follows it, *Joh.* 13. 26, 27. (2) Their preſumption and falſe hopes of heaven are hereby ſtrengthened; they think, if they doe but receive, their ſins ſhall be pardoned, and their ſouls ſaved. (3) Their guilt is more encreaſed, becauſe they are guilty of the body and blood of Chriſt. This is dreadful guilt, this is a [illegible] fact. (4) They prophane Gods Ordinance, and abuſe Chriſts Inſtitution. (5) They are thereby riper for temporal Plagues, 1 *Cor.* 11.30. (6) They eat and haſten their own damnation, 1 *Cor.* 11. 29. But I dwell not upon this, becauſe I muſt purſue my deſign in reference to the late providence in the dreadful Plague.

SECT. XI.

Queſtion Fourth, *Why God is pleaſed to remove Judgements, though many men are worſe than they were before?*

THat God ſhould ſtay his hand, and put up his Arrows into his Quiver, and his Sword into his ſheath, and call in the deſtroying Angel, is indeed matter and cauſe of great admiration; that

that when men sin still, God doth not slaughter still; when men provoke him still, that he doth not by the Plague punish them still: The sins that were offensive unto God at first, are amongst us still; the sins continue, the Judgement removed: Oh stand and wonder at this, that when Justice hath cut down so many, that Mercy yet hath spared so many; especially if you seriously consider Gods holiness and purity, Gods justice and severity, Gods infinite hatred unto sin, and that it is not the death of thousands that can satisfie Gods Justice, nor the death of those that are gone down into the grave, that have pacified Gods wrath for us that do yet remain alive. What may be the Reasons?

Reasons are,

1. From God.

1. God hath done this *for his own Names sake*: If you goe to the Church-yards and Burial places in and about the City, and see the heaps of dead bodyes, and ask, Why hath God done this? We must answer, We all have sinned. If you goe into your houses and dwelling places, and finde so many living, after so great a Mortality, and ask, why hath God done this? We must answer, It is for his own Name sake. The Plague was inflicted because we had displeased him, but it is removed because Mercy hath pleased him: We had deserved the inflicting of it, but could not merit the removing of it. In this late Providence Justice and Mercy have been wonderfully magnified; Justice in removing so many thousands, and laying them in their graves; Mercy in sparing so many thousands,

ſands, and maintaining them in life that have been ſo long walking in the Valley of the ſhadow of death: This is, becauſe God in the midſt of Judgement hath remembred Mercy. *Ezek.*36. 21. *But I had pity for mine holy Name,*-- ver.22. *Therefore ſay unto the houſe of Iſrael, thus ſaith the Lord God, I doe not this for your ſakes, O houſe of Iſrael, but for mine holy Name ſake.* So when God gives good things, as well as when he removeth evil, it is for his Name ſake. God hath taken away your ſickneſs and plague-ſores, and given you health. Verſ. 31. *Then ſhall ye remember your own evil wayes, and your doings, that were not good, and ſhall loathe your ſelves in your own ſight, for your Iniquities, and for your Abominations.* V. 32. *Not for your ſakes doe I this, ſaith the Lord God, be it known unto you; be aſhamed and confounded for your own wayes, O houſe of Iſrael.* Oh if you have been ſpared for his Names ſake, then let all the praiſe of your life be unto his holy Name. But then you muſt not be worſe but better than you were.

2. From the Elect converted.

2. God hath removed his Judgement in *anſwer to the Prayers of his people.* Prayer hath been an ancient Antidote againſt the Plague, and many have been preſerved from the grave as a return to prayer; and ſo it hath of old been prevalent for the removing of the Plague: And therefore Magiſtrates commanding the people to faſt and pray, proceeded in *Solomons* courſe to have it removed; 1 *King.* 8. 37. *If there be in the Land Famine, if there be Peſtilence-- whatſoever*

soever Plague, whatsoever sickness there be. What must they do then? *Vers.* 38. *What prayer and supplication* (prayer you see is a *Panpharmacum*, a remedy for every disease) *soever be made by any man, or by all thy people Israel, which shall know every man the plague of his own heart, and spread forth his hands towards this house.* Vers. 39. *Then hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and forgive*— Prayer is the remedy prescribed by *Solomon*, But what are the persons whose prayers shall prevail for the removing of so sore a judgement? Not those that have Plague-wishes so often in their mouthes, but the prayer of any man, that knoweth (*i. e.* feeth and is sensible of) the Plague of his own heart.

3. God may remove judgements *for the benefit of his Elect that yet may be unconverted*, and in mercy to them, who may be yet in their sins, God may stay this Plague, it might be for some yet unborn, that may proceed from the Loyns of some that are now worse than they were before. The patience and long-suffering of God is conducible to the conversion and salvation of Gods Elect, 2*Pet.* 3.15. And doth lead men to repentance, *Rom.* 2.4. Many peradventure have not yet repented, whom God will bring to glory; and he that hath designed them to the end, will preserve them in life till the means have been effectual to fit them for that end. 3. From Elect unconverted.

4. God may spare some that are worse, by removing judgements, because *as yet they are not* 4. From Reprobates.

ripe enough for slaughter: The Oxe is spared longer time, because not yet fit for the Shambles. Thus God spared *Jerusalem* till they had filled up the measure of their sins, *Mat.* 23.32. And so God exercised patience towards the *Amorites*, till their iniquity was full, *Gen* 15.16 God may remove and keep off judgement from some; and this may be in judgement to them, as he may in mercy, deny some mercies unto some.

Sect. XII.

Question Fifth. *What are the aggravations of this great impiety, to be worse after Gods sorest judgements than they were before?*

That many wicked men are so, we have shewed before, and given the proof and reasons of it, But wo to you whose case this is: Is this the return you make to God? Is this the fruit of his patience and forbearance to you? Do you thus require the Lord? Oh foolish people and unwise! *Deut.* 32.6. Will you seriously consider this evil frame of heart, and this ungodly practise in your lives, in these following particulars?

I. Are you worse then you were before, then *you are more like unto the Devil than you were before, and the more unlike to God that made you.* A man full of all sin, and bent to every wickedness is

is called a childe of the Devil, *Act.* 13. 10. The Devil sins as much as he can, and thou dost as wickedly as thou canst, *Jer.* 3. 5. It is a folly in men to picture things immaterial and invisible, and living. by things without life, material and visible; never send a man to view the picture of the Devil with a cloven foot drawn by Art, the most exact and accurate lively picture of the Devil (as a Devil, that is, as a sinner) is the worst of wicked men; and who are worse than thou, that neither mercy can draw, nor judgement drive to God and Christ?

ῥαθυμία. Vitium, quo qui laborat, ad quodvis scelus, paratus est. Joh. 8. 44.

II. The worse you grow, and the further you proceed in sin, *the more impudent you will be in the commission of it*: The beginnings of sin are often done with blushings of face, but the progress in sin is voide of all modesty; then you will be drunk and glory in it, then you will swear and not be ashamed of it, *Jer.* 6. 15. *Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination: nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush*—Pro. 7. 13.

III. The further thou proceedest in making progress in thy sin, *the more it is to be feared thou wilt never return, but if thou shouldest, the more thou hast to sorrow for.* It is but very rare that God bringeth those back that are come up to an height of sin; sometimes he doth, that none might despair; but very rarely, that none might presume. It is to be feared thou art forsaken of God, and he hath left thee to thy self, when

word, not rod, can reclaim thee from thy sin, nor put a restraint upon thee from waxing worse.

IV. The worse thou art after *such* a judgement, *The sooner God will be provoked to hast on thy destruction by some other.* God hath not spent all his arrows in the late judgement, he hath his Quiver full still; and if thou go on when God giveth thee yet a space to repent, after so great a warning by the Plague, he will ere long cast thee into a bed of trouble, *Rev.* 2. 21, 22. Thy increased wickedness is to Gods wrath, as the blast to the fire, will quickly blow it up into a flame; though thy conscience is asleep, yet thy damnation slumbereth not, 2 *Pet.* 2.1.3. while thou lingerest in thy sin, Gods judgements do not linger, but are upon the wing; and the worse thou art, the sooner will they befall thee, and be more heavy when they come. *Jer.*48.16. *The calamity of Moab is near to come, and his affliction hasteth fast.*

V. The worse thou growest, *the more thou heapest up treasures of wrath,* and every sin is adding to the pile of that fire by which thou must eternally be burned; temporal judgements might quickly befall thee, but if they do not, eternal damnation shall overtake thee; and the *higher* thou goest in wickedness, the *lower* thou shalt sink and lye in hell; God will proportion thy degrees of torments to thy growth and progress in sin. Now thou hast a treasure of sin, *Mat.* 12. 35. And God hath his treasures of wrath, *Deut.* 32.34.

And

And as thou layest *in* sin, to the treasury of sin, so God layeth *in* wrath, to the treasury of wrath. * *Rom.* 2. 5. Thy present *preservation*, is but a *reservation* to greater indignation, then is discovered in a Plague. *Tarditatem supplicii gravitate compensabit deus.* He will recompence the delay of thy misery and punishment, with the weight and load of it, *Job* 36. 13.

* Θησαυρίζεις. q. ὡς τὸ αὔριον τιθέναι. *In crastinum recondere, quo significatur homines dum cupiditatibus suis quotidie indulgendo existimant se aliquod bonis suis adjicere, tandem pro thesauro inventuros dei indignationem.* Bez. in loc.

VI. To be worse and more wicked after so great a judgement, will be *to slight and set at nought the justice of God*, when you have seen with your eyes the dreadful heaps of *dead Corpse*, that it hath made in every Church-yard. Have you not seen that God is displeased with sin, and will you go on to do worse, as if you would bid defiance to God, even when he is angry and displeased? Have you not seen that there is wrath in God? and that justice will call sinners to his *barre* by dragging them out of this world? And will you after all this go on to sin against a just God, and as it were say, let justice do its pleasure, I will have mine? this doth aggravate your sin.

VII. To be worse after such a judgement, will be *to sin against the Patience and the mercy of God that hath spared thee, and waiteth to see what thou*

wilt do after such a visitation. The mercy of God is the attribute thou intendest to appeal to, it is that which thou hopest in, but by this thy wickedness thou wilt turn mercy it self against thee, that which thou wilt make thy request unto, must be the mercy of God, but this will plead against thee, and patience will plead against thee. *Lord, will Mercy say, when thousands dyed weekly in* London, *I had pity upon this sinner and did spare him; when the Angel went through the Streets and Lanes in* London, *I Mercy marked out this man for longer life, but he abused me, and sinned the more. And I* [*shall Patience say*] *waited some moneths or years after the Plague, to see if the mercy shewed him, would any thing work upon him, but I was abused too as well as Mercy: The longer I, Patience, did lengthen out his life, the more he added to his sins, and therefore now we, both Patience and Mercy, deliver him up into the hands of Justice to deal with him according to his sins, and according to the wrong he hath offered unto us.* Oh how will thy mouth be stopped when Mercy and Patience shall plead against thee; sins against Mercy and protracted Patience, are aggravated sins; and the pleadings of Mercy and Patience against a man, will be the most piercing cutting pleadings.

VIII. The worse thou art, *the more thou wilt have to answer for, and the greater accounts thou wilt have to make when ever thou shalt dye.* The more thou sinnest, the more sins shalt thou finde in the book of Gods remembrance, and in the book

book of thine own Conſcience, when thou ſhalt be brought before the Barr of God: So many ſins committed before the Plague begun, and ſo many while the Plague continued, and ſo many when it was ſtayed, and this ſinner ſpared. When it ſhall be ſet down in the book of God, ſuch a ſinner was drunk ſo many times while the Plague was round about his habitation, ſo many Oaths he ſwore, when he ſaw multitudes buryed every day; ſo long the Plague was in the Pariſh where he dwelt, and in the houſe in which he lived, and he never made one hearty prayer unto God all that time: And ſuch notorious ſins, in, and after a time of a ſweeping Plague, will multiply thy account and aggravate thy miſery.

IX. To be worſe after ſuch Judgements, will be *to adde Incorrigibleneſs to thy former wickedneſs*: As before thou didſt ſhew that thou hadſt an *unteachable* heart, ſo now thou declareſt thou haſt an *incorrigible* heart: Thou wouldeſt not be inſtructed by Gods Word, neither wilt thou be corrected by Gods Rod; thou didſt ſtop thine ears againſt Gods Word, and thou hardeneſt thy heart againſt his Rod. But if thou wilt not be corrected by a Plague, thou ſhalt be tormented in the Infernal Pit.

X. To be worſe after *ſuch* a Judgement, *will be high Ingratitude*. Thy life was the deareſt thing thou haſt in the world (except the ſin in thy heart) for, *skin for skin and all that he hath*

he

he will give for his life, (except his ſin, and he will venture his life, and loſe it too, before he will part with his ſin,) and hath God kept thee, and is this thy thanks to God, to diſhonour him more, and to provoke him more? As if he had ſpared thee for no other end, but to ſin againſt him? Oh what is Ingratitude if this be not? Oh now for Gods ſake, and for thy precious ſouls ſake, that as thy body hath hitherto eſcaped the grave, ſo thy ſoul may (if poſſible) eſcape the damnation of hell, Be entreated, *Sinner*, to conſider the evil of thy preſent practice, after ſuch a narrow eſcape of death and the grave: Oh wilt thou that art but briars and thorns, ſet thy ſelf againſt God that is a conſuming fire? Doſt thou ſleight the wrath of the Almighty, or deſpiſe his power, or contemn his Judgements? Doſt thou think that thou canſt grapple with Omnipotency, and make thy party good againſt Almighty ſtrength? Didſt thou ever read of any one that hardened himſelf againſt God and proſpered? and doſt thou think that thou ſhalt be the firſt? who art thou? or what is thy ſtrength, or what were thy Anceſtours, that thou doſt thus in pride and ſtubbornneſs of thy heart dare the great, eternal God, who can look thee into hell, and frown thee in a moment into another world? Sure, if thou hadſt the knowledge of God, of thy ſelf, of ſin, of the guilt of ſin, of Hell and the torments thereof, thou wouldeſt not thus proceed to adde theſe new ſins to thy former old ſins, but wouldeſt fall down upon thy knees, and cover thy face in the very duſt be-

before the Lord, in deep humiliation for thy ſins, and wouldeſt own it as a Mercy ſo great, that cannot be expreſs'd, that the Plague hath been ſo vehemently raging round about thy habitation, and it may be hath been upon thy body, and thou yet alive, and thy body not rotting in a cold grave, nor thy ſoul roaring in a hot Hell? think on this, this is Mercy; and wilt thou ſo abuſe it?

Sect. XIII.

What are the ſigns of a man that waxeth worſe and worſe under all the Means that God uſeth to make him better? Queſtion Sixth.

MY purpoſe is not here to ſpeak of the declinings of Grace in the hearts of Gods people, which never is ſo much (becauſe not total) to denominate them abſolutely bad, though they make them worſe (becauſe on the loſing hand) being compared with themſelves, when better in the lively actings and daily increaſe of grace; but of the growth of wicked men in ſin and Impiety, which may be diſcerned by theſe ſymptomes.

I. The *leſs a man is attending upon God in the uſe of holy Means, the worſe he is.* Thou waſt wont to keep up a conſtancy, or at leaſt a frequency in holy duties, though thou never didſt perform them in a right *manner*, nor from a right

right *principle*, nor for a right *end*; yet time was, that thou couldeſt not omit them, but thy natural Conſcience would reproach thee, and moleſt thy peace; and though the performance of thoſe duties in *thy* manner and way, did never prove thee to be *good*, yet the total omiſſion of them *now*, doth prove thee to be *worſe*: inaſmuch as thou haſt ſhaked off all form of Religion, and doſt not profeſs thy ſelf to be at all Religious, but haſt ſtifled Natural Conſcience, and laid aſide a ſenſe of a Deity, which before did ſtir thee up to do ſome Homage unto God. Thou *didſt* pray, but *now* thou doſt not; thou *didſt* hear, but *now* thou doſt not; it is becauſe thou art worſe.

II. The *leſſe thou lyeſt under the common workings of the Spirit of God, the worſe thou art*: Though thou heareſt and prayeſt as before, yet the Spirit of God doth not ſtrive with thee as before: Thou waſt wont to finde thy heart ſomething affected, and to have ſome common convictions and relentings for ſin, and ſome purpoſes and reſolutions to forſake thy ſin, and leave thy wicked wayes and company, and almoſt perſwaded to come over unto Chriſt; but now thou art no more affected than the ſeat thou ſitteſt upon, and the Pillar thou leaneſt againſt; thou haſt quenched the motions of the Spirit, and he in wrath hath departed from thee, and leaves thee to the hardneſs of thy heart, and the blindneſs of thy minde, and then thou muſt needs be waxing worſe.

III. The

III. The *more thou art found in the Iteration and Repetition of the acts of sin, the worse thou art.* Thou wast wont to swear but seldom, but now Oaths are frequent in thy mouth: Thou wast wont to be drunk more seldom, but now it is thy weekly, or thy daily practice; *Iteration of sin is an aggravation of sin*: The number of thy sins, and the greatness of thy guilt is hereby encreased, and thou made worse.

IV. The *more kinds of sins thou dost usually fall into, the worse thou art.* Thou wast wont to swear, but not to be drunk, but now both: Thou wast wont to be drunk, but wast not given to uncleanness; but now thou art; and to uncleanness thou addest scorning at godliness, when sometimes thou seemedst to approve it, and speak for it; and to thy scorning of godliness, thou proceedest to the persecution of godliness, when before thou didst pretend to favour and to countenance it. Thou art increased in thy wickedness.

V. The *fewer self-Reflexions, the worse thou art.* Thou wast use to reflect upon thy wayes, and sometimes consider of thy deviations from the Rule of holiness, and thy Conscience did check and did reprove thee; but now thou goest on and never lookest back, so much as to consider wherein thou goest astray; and though thou art more wicked, and more vile, yet thou hast more peace and quietness in thy wayes. It is be-

becauſe thy heart is more hard, and thy Conſcience more ſeared, and thou worſe.

VI. The *greater Light thou ſinneſt againſt, and the more thou goeſt on againſt the Dictates of thy Conſcience, the worſe thou art.* Conſcience diſcovereth to thee the evil of thy wayes, the wickedneſs of thy life: Conſcience threatneth thee with damnation, with the loſs of God and Happineſs, and thundereth againſt thee, and doth diſturb thee in thy ſin, and yet thou goeſt on againſt thy knowledge, and doſt impriſon the Truths of God; thou art worſe.

VII. The *more of thy heart and will is in thy ſinnings than before, the worſe thou art now, than before.* The more the will doth give conſent, and the more the will doth chooſe wickedneſs, the greater progreſs thou haſt made in thy ſinful courſes. Though a Childe of God doth commit a ſin, yet becauſe his *will* and the *bent* of his *heart* is againſt it, the leſſer is the aggravation of his ſin: when he can ſay, The thing that I doe, I would not, I allow it not. So, when thou art *wilful* in thy ſin, thou frequenteſt wicked company, and thou *wilt* doe it; thou prophaneſt the Lords day, and thou *wilt* do it, this maketh thee to be very bad. The more of reſolution and purpoſe of heart, the more of the choice and conſent of the will in ſinning, the greater is the ſinner.

VIII. The

VIII. The *lesser force divine Arguments have upon thy heart to keep thee from sin, than before, thou art so much worser than thou wast before.* Time was, that Arguments taken from the Wrath of God, from the Torments of Hell, from Judgement to come, from the Curses written in the Law of God, did awe thy heart, and restrain thy hand from the open actings of thy grosser sins; these were once the banks that dammed up thy wickednesse, but now thou sleightest all these, that Hell doth not affright thee, and the wrath of God doth not awe thy heart; but the Spring and Fountain of sin within, is risen higher, and overflowes these banks, and like water spreads it self, and diffuseth it self in the general course of thy life.

IX. The *lesser force humane Arguments have upon thy heart, to keep thee from sin than before, thou art so much worser than thou wast before.* Though abstaining from sin upon such accounts, doth not prove the *truth of grace*, yet the committing of sin notwithstanding these, doth argue *growth of sin*. Now these humane Arguments that did formerly restrain thee, were such as these.

1. *Shame* amongst men. Thou hadst an Inclination to wicked company, but thou wast ashamed to be seen amongst them; and therefore didst not associate with them. But now thou thinkest it no shame, or if thou dost, thou hast a face of brass, and an heart of stone, and blushest not. Thou art worse.

2. *Care*

2. *Care of Reputation.* Thou wast tender of thy Credit, and good Name; and though thou hadst a love unto some sins, that would have disgraced thee amongst men, yet now thou wilt blot thy Name, and lose thy Credit, and sacrifice thy Reputation to satisfie thy Lust.

3. *Costlinesse of sin.* Some sins are very chargeable, and call for great expences; and thy love to thy Money, and natural affection to thy Wife and Children, was a barre which did restrain thee from them: Thou wouldest not feed and satisfie thy filthy Lusts, because it would be chargeable to thee; thou refrainedst from riotous Prodigals, because company with them would waste thine Estate: But now thou thinkest no cost too great, no charge too much, that thou mayest have thy fill of sin, but tradest, and labourest, and workest, to get something to maintain thy Lust, and wilt rather that thy Wife and Children should want bread at home, than thou shouldest not have enough to spend upon thy sins abroad. Thou art now grown to an exceeding magnitude in sin, that thou art monstrous to beholders.

4. *Health of body.* Such sins that tend to the impairing of thy health thou wouldest not commit: Thou didst refrain, not so much because they would damn thy soul, as destroy thy body. Thou thoughtest excessive drinking would shorten thy life, and hasten thy death, and bring thee sooner to thy grave; that acts of uncleanness would fill thee full of loathsom diseases, and leave some mark upon thy body, where-

whereby thou wouldest be noted for an unclean adulterer. But now thou wilt venture health, and life, and all that thou mayest more freely sin: and the very food thou eatest is *now* not only to nourish thy body, but to provoke thee to lust. Verily thou art much worse than thou wast.

5. *Fear of death.* When the fear of God would not prevail to keep thee from sin, yet fear of death somtimes hath done it, and according to the strength of the fears of death, have been thy restraints from sin: but now thou canst think of death, and speak of thy death, and yet act thy sinne.

6. *Displeasure of men.* Thou hast had dependance upon some that hate such sins that thou lovest in thy heart, but because thou wouldest not loose their favour thou hast bridled thy sin, but now thou layest the reignes loose upon the neck of thy lusts, and wilt proceed to obey them, let who will be displeased thereby. When thou wilt displease thy best friend, and them upon whom thou dost depend for lively-hood and maintenance, that thou mayst please thy lust, it is a sign that sin is very high in thy heart, any one of these formerly were a sufficient bolt to keep thee from grosser sins, but *now* all put together are too weak; a signe that sin is so much the stronger.

X. *The more thou hast had experience of the dreadfull effects of sin, and the more God hath punished thee for thy sin, and yet wilt proceed, the greater sinner thou art.* God hath punished thee

with poverty as the fruite of thy sin; with diseases in thy body, with horrours in thy conscience, with the death of thy relations; when thou hast tasted the bitterness of sin to set against the pleasures of sin, when God hath put worm-wood and gall into thy sin, yet thou art bent upon it: thou art very bad.

XI. *The more thou justifiest and defendest thy self after the commission of sin than formerly, so much the worser thou art than formerly.* When thou wast reproved, thou wast use to acknowledge thy sin, and to confess thy wickedness, but now thou dost plead for thy lust, and pleadest for thy evil wayes, and takest the quarrell of sin upon thy self, it is a signe thy heart is more wedded to thy lusts, by how much the more thou espousest its cause.

XII. *When thou art more presumptuous in thy sinnings, and addest more contempt of God, and pride and contumacy than formerly, the worse thou art.* Sins of presumption are scarlet sins, of a crimson dye; when a man sinneth against God, and blesseth himself in his wickedness, and presumeth of Gods mercy, and presumeth upon the patience of God, a man that sins presumptuously makes a bold adventure against expres threatnings of the Law of God, and is mingled with great contempt of God; it is no less than reproaching and despising of God himself, *Num.* 15. 30. *But the soul that doth ought presumptuously--reproacheth the Lord; and that soul shall be*

be cut off from among his people, verſ. 31. *Becauſe he hath deſpiſed the word of the Lord, and hath broken his commandment; that ſoul ſhall be utterly cut off: his iniquity ſhall be upon him.*

XIII. *The more mercies thou ſinneſt againſt than formerly, the worſer thou art than before.* God hath given thee more mercies, and multiplyed many good things upon thee, and yet thou committeſt more ſins, than when thou hadſt fewer mercies; to make Gods mercy to be fewel for thy luſts, is an aggravation of ſinning, for as much as it is contrary to the end of mercy, which is to draw men off from ſin: every mercy thou receiveſt hath a voice, and its language is, repent of ſin, return to God, *Rom.* 2. 4. God loadeth thee with mercy, and the more thou preſſeſt him down with thy ſin; the more good, and the more mercifull God is to thee, the more vile and rebellious thou art againſt God, this is to be highly wicked.

XIV. *The more thou draweſt others into ſin by thy entiſements or example than before; ſo much the worſe thou art.* When thou art not content to ſin alone, nor to diſhonour God thy ſelf, but draweſt and incourageſt others to do ſo alſo; and ſo damneſt thy own ſoul and others too; and makeſt thy ſelf guilty of the bloud of thoſe thou allureſt with thee into ſin. The more ſins thou committeſt thy ſelf, the worſe thou art, and the more perſons thou doſt influence by thy ſin to partake with thee, the worſe thou art.

Thus if thou wilt compare thy self what thou art *now* with what thou haſt been *formerly*, thou mighteſt diſcern how much more thou ſinneſt now than thou didſt before.

Sect. XIV.

Queſtion Seventh. *What conſiderations may be uſefull to ſtop the ſtreame of ſuch mens wickedneſs, that yet are waxing worſe and worſe?*

BEcauſe I am loath to leave thee with a bare conviction, that thou art worſe than thou waſt wont to be; I ſhall add a few conſiderations to preſſe thee to put a ſtop unto thy ſinnings, hoping that though thou haſt gone far, yet thou mayſt return: while thou art out of Hell, thou art within our call, and within the reach of Exhortation and reproof. *God* hath called often to thee to return, and yet thou haſt not returned, but art going on unto deſtruction. The *Son* of God hath called to thee, and ſaid, *How long* wilt thou goe on in thy Rebellion againſt him that would redeem and ſave thy ſoul? he hath told thee, if thou doſt proceed thou muſt be damned, and ſaid, the Mercy of God will not ſave thee, and my Merits they will not, they ſhall not ſave thee, but if thou wilt return to God, and come to me, here is mercy for thee, here is pardon for thee, and I will give eternal life unto thee. The *Spirit* of God hath often moved upon thy heart, he hath been often knock-

ing

ing at thy doore, that thou wouldeſt open thy heart and let him in, and he would apply the blood of Chriſt unto thee, and he would fill thee with better joyes, and better pleaſures, and better comforts than thou ever foundeſt in the way of ſin. But hitherto thou haſt ſtopped thine ears, and ſtiffened thy neck, and hardened thy heart, and wouldeſt not hearken nor obey.

The *Miniſters* of God have often wooed thee and beſeeched thee with tears in their eyes, and ſorrow in their hearts, as if their happineſs had been wrapped up in thine, and as if they could not have gone to Heaven and been ſaved without thee: while patience waited upon thee, they have been earneſt with thee, and now at laſt one unworthy to preach the Goſpel, is a ſuiter to thy ſoul, that thou wouldeſt be divorced from thy ſin and be married unto Chriſt; as *yet* thou art out of hell, and art not yet reckoned among the dead, nor numbred amongſt the damned, as *yet* thou art not irrecoverably loſt, *this* day Chriſt is once more tendred to thee, in the name of God I once more offer thee pardon and eternall life, upon thy repenting of thy ſin, and turning unto God.

Oh that I could perſwade thee, or if I cannot, as indeed I cannot; oh that God would yet perſwade thee? If I might be ſerviceable to thy ſoule, oh how ſhould I rejoyce; if I did but know where thou doſt dwell, that haſt been wicked all thy dayes, and now art reading of theſe lines, having a purpoſe in thy heart to come to Chriſt, I would come to thee (as oppor-

tunity was offered) and beg upon my knees, that thou wouldeſt cheriſh thoſe purpoſes, and be perſwaded to what conduceth to thy eternall happineſs: if teares and prayers would do it, I would endeavour (though my heart is hard) to ſhed them for thee; if putting my hands, under thy feet, and ſtooping to the meaneſt office of love unto thy ſoule, would excite thee to let Chriſt into thy heart, how readily (by the grace of God) would I be willing to it.

I beſeech thee by the mercies of God, by the death of Chriſt, by the coming of our Lord, by the love thou beareſt to thy ſelf, as ever thou wouldeſt ſee the face of Chriſt with comfort, as ever thou wouldeſt eſcape the damnation of Hell, return at laſt, and though it be late, yet return at laſt. But if thou wilt not, let God be my witneſs, let as many as read theſe lines be my witneſſes, let thy own Conſcience be my witneſs, that thou haſt been asked, entreated, yea earneſtly entreated to reform, and mend, and turn to God. But in hopes that I may prevail, I beſeech thee in the fear of God, give in a ſober and deliberate anſwer unto theſe following Queſtions.

Firſt, *Whether art thou going, while thou art waxing worſe and worſe?* Doſt thou know that Hell is at the end of the way in which thou art daily walking? Doſt thou know, that if thou doſt proceed a little further, a little longer in this courſe, thou wilt be among the Devils, thoſe curſed

curſed Fiends of Hell? Or doſt thou know it, and yet wilt venture to dance about the brink of a bottomleſs pit? who hath bewitched thee? or what hath made thee mad, that thou ſeeſt thou art going unto Hell, and yet wilt venture on?

Secondly, *Doſt thou believe the Scripture to be the Word of God, or doſt thou not?* And are the threatnings contained therein, true, thinkeſt thou, or are they not? Wilt thou ſay they be falſe, or that they were found out by ſome Preciſians, or are the workings of ſome melancholly brain? or that they were found out by ſome Politician, to keep the world in awe? I would have thee know, that to thy *eternal* ſorrow thou ſhalt finde them all true, even to a tittle; and to thy everlaſting woe ſhalt know the truth of Gods Word: When thou art ſhrieking in the flames of Hell, and roaring hideouſly among the damned, becauſe of Gods eternal wrath; thou ſhalt be convinced, that the wicked ſhall be turned into Hell, that the Unbeliever ſhall be damned, and that it was true which thou waſt told, that without repentance there was no deliverance from eternal condemnation.

But if thou doſt believe this Word to be true, what aileth thee then to live as thou doſt? that thou acteſt quite contrary to what is contained in the Word of God? Doth not the Word of God in a thouſand places cry down ſin, and preſs to holineſs? doth it not tell thee, the drunkard, the covetous, the unbelieving, the lyar, ſhall

be damned? If thou never didst observe such places, take thy Bible and turn unto them. *1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. Rev. 21. 8. Heb. 12. 14. Gal. 5. 20. to 25. Col. 3. 5, 6. Eph. 5. 5, 6. Mar. 16. 16. Mat. 18. 3. Luk. 13. 3, 5.* Canst thou read and believe these Scriptures to be true, and yet goe on in the practice of those things that the eternal, holy God doth forbid upon pain of eternal torments? Wilt thou be worse than thy very beast, which thou canst not force into the fire when he seeth it before him. *Shall I call out thy Neighbours to behold a dreadful sight, viz. A man that knowes he is in the way to Hell, and yet will goe on.*

Thirdly, *With what face or heart canst thou hope (as thou dost) that God will pardon thy sin, or save thy soul, while thou persistest in thy wickedness, and encreasest therein?* Shew me an instance of any one man in all the Word of God, that was pardoned and saved, who repented not, and I will be thy slave for ever. I know, great sinners have been saved; and I know, those that have gone far have obtained mercy: *Manasseh* did, *2 Chron. 33. 12, 13. Mary Magdalene* did, *Luk. 7.* But then they turned unto God. Canst thou say, there is any one now in Heaven that did not repent, and believe before he dyed? or dost thou think that thou shalt be the only man?

Fourthly, *Whom dost thou set thy self against?* Or who is it that thou dost provoke? whose anger and

and indignation art thou daily kindling against thy self? What art thou, that thus dost sin? or what is God against whom thou sinnest? dost thou know thy self, and thine own weakness? And dost thou know God, and his Almighty power? art thou any better than chaffe before the winde of Gods wrath? art thou any better than stubble before a consuming Fire? canst thou make thy party good against God? Then why dost thou take thy bed, when he layeth his finger light upon thee? or why dost thou complain and art so restless under the pain of the tooth-ache? why dost thou roar so much under the pain in thy bowels? and why dost thou groan, when he makes thee sick? why art thou sick, and why wilt thou dye, if thou canst contend with God? But if thou canst not, *poor Worm*, thou canst not; why then wilt thou proceed and increase thy wickedness more and more, to provoke him more and more?

Fifthly, *How canst thou call thy self a Christian, while thou daily increasest in thy sin against God and Christ.* Christians have their denomination from Christ, because they follow his steps, and own him for their Lord and Master: Christ was holy, and so is every true Christian; Christ hated sin, and so doth every true Christian; Christ did the will of his Father, and thou art doing the will of the Flesh and of the Devil. That which consisteth of a head of one kinde, and members of another, is monstrous.

If

If any creature had the head of a man, and the members were the members of a beast, it would be monstrous. Christ is an holy head, and all his members united unto him are holy members; therefore thou art none of them: Take it as thou wilt, thou art not a Christian, that should not be thy Appellation; thou art more rightly called a sinner, a Childe of the Devil.

Sixthly, *How canst thou goe unto thy Prayers and yet go on in thy sin*, and come to the Word preached, and hear drunkennes reproved, and go away and be drunk? How canst thou sit in thy Pew, and hear the Minister from God tell thee, the drunkard shall be damned, and all thy Neighbours know thee for a drunkard, and yet hold up thy head? Where is thy shame? art thou become impudent? where is thy fear of God and his Word? art thou utterly hardened? where is thy Conscience? is it quite seared?

Seventhly, *Dost thou think that God will never call thee to an account?* Dost thou think that time will alwayes last? dost thou think thy soul shall live for ever, and yet do that which will bring thee to an eternity of misery? and expose thy self for a little *momentany* pleasure unto *eternal* torments? Thus I have set before thee these Considerations, whereby thou mayst be brought to bethink thy self, and at last enquire

quire, What would you have me to doe? I answer thee:

1. Make a stand and pause a little with thy self, whether it be not so with thee or no? and labour to convince thy self of the hainousness of thy sins, in making such an increase and growth in sin.

2. When thou art convinced thus, urge it upon thy heart till thou feelest it begin to melt, and to be dissolved in thy breast. Use thy Reason for thy souls good, after this manner: Oh God hath been good to me, and I have been wicked against God; God was alwayes good to me, and I have been alwayes evil against God; God multiplyed his mercy upon me, and I multiplyed my sins against God; if he had not given me bread to eat, I had dyed with hunger; and if he had not given me drink, I had perished with thirst; but what he gave me for my nourishment I have abused to gluttony and drunkenness; I have fought against God with his own mercy, and made his goodness an encouragement to me in my wickedness: He lengthened out his mercy, and I did lengthen out mine iniquity; Oh what rich grace and patience is this, that I am not in Hell! Oh this was long-suffering indeed, to bear so long with such a Swearer and Drunkard as I have been; and when the dreadfull Plague hath taken away my Companions in sin, yet I am left behinde; Oh that it may be, that I may repent and turn to God! Woe is me! I have been damning of my precious soul, and have

spent

ſpent my dayes hitherto in diſhonouring of a good and patient God.

3. Then reſolve with thy ſelf, that by the grace of God thou wilt forſake and leave thoſe practiſes, and wilt no longer continue in thy wickedneſſe; ſay, Now I ſee this is not my *Way* to happineſs; ſwearing, and lying, and drunkenneſs, is not my way to the Kingdom of God: The Devil hath deceived me, and my Companions have deceived me, and my own wicked heart hath beguiled me; I will, by the grace of God, I will do ſo no more; I am reſolved I will do ſo no more: And write down thy Reſolution, that thou mayeſt have it under thine own hand, that ſuch a day thou didſt reſolve to do ſo no more.

4. Beg of God that thou mayſt be deeply humbled for what thou haſt already done, and labour that thy ſorrow may be proportionable to what thy ſins have been.

5. Make haſte to Chriſt, and take him and receive him for thy Lord and Saviour, and ſubmit to him upon his Goſpel-terms, as willing he ſhould rule thee, as ever thou waſt for ſin to rule thee.

6. Then endeavour to be *as good* as thou haſt *been bad*, as holy as thou haſt been wicked, as eminent for piety, as thou haſt been exemplary for iniquity; ſpeak for Holineſſe as much as ever thou didſt ſpeak againſt it; and love the wayes of God as much as thou waſt wont to hate them, and by perſevering ſo to doe, thou ſhalt finde great mercy will be

be shewn to thee, who hast been so great a sinner.

Sect. XV.

Now I will draw some *Corollaries* from this first branch of this Direction, and so pass on unto the second. Is it the Nature of sin to make men worse and worse? and do wicked men usually wax worse and worse? Then learn, Corollaries from the first part of this Direction.

1. *The evil that there is in sin*: There is a depth in the evil of sin that cannot be fathomed, and a length in the evil of sin that cannot be measured; that is very bad that makes men so in every condition, as grace is very good that turneth every thing for the best to them to whom it is infused.

2. Learn that *wicked men are never from under a curse*: Let their condition be what it will, prosperity is a curse unto them, adversity is a curse, and deliverances are in wrath. When they do increase in riches, they do increase in sin; envy not the prosperity of the wicked.

3. Learn the *bottomless depth of iniquity in a wicked mans heart*: He was bad twenty years ago; he was a grief to all the godly in the Town and Parish where he lived, but yet he is many times worse than before.

4. Learn *what abundance of guilt an old sinner goes with to his grave when he comes to dye*: He was bad when he was born, and worse while he lived, and worst of all when he is to dye.

5. Learn

5. Learn *the equity of Gods Justice in punishing a wicked man with eternal torments for sins committed in time*: For he sinned more and more as long as he lived, and if he had lived longer, he would have sinned longer; and if he had lived for ever, he would have sinned for ever.

6. Learn *the over-ruling providence of God*: that setteth bounds to wicked mens sins; if he did not restrain them, they would be worse, and do worse than they do.

7. Learn, *that natural men by the improvement of common grace, or the means of grace, cannot work themselves into a state of grace*, nor of themselves that are bad, make themselves to be good; for we have shewed, that without the speciall and irresistible operations of the Spirit of God, wicked men grow worse under the Administrations of the Gospel.

8. *The folly of delays and procrastinations of repentance and turning unto God*: Wicked men think they can repent when they will, and though they have no heart to turn to God for the present, yet they will hereafter; but he that is not disposed to turn to God and repent to day, will finde his heart more indisposed to morrow, and the longer they put it off, the more unwilling and unable they will be to do it hereafter. We have heard we must not be *worse*, now let us see we must be *better*, and that is the second part of this first Direction.

SECT.

Sect. XVI.

HAth the Plague been raging, and you yet alive? *then be better than you were before.* And here I eſpecially direct my ſpeech to thoſe that had the grace of God infuſed into their hearts, before this Judgement came upon us; that you would improve this providence by being better than you were before; if Drunkards and Swearers will not be better, yet be you; if ſenſualiſts and fleſh-pleaſers will not be better, yet be you. It may be the wicked will be worſe, but will you be ſo too? If Gods people are not mended by his Judgements, who will? and hath God ſwept away ſo many thouſands into another world, and ſhall there be no good effect, or fruit upon neither bad nor good? *God forbid? London* hath been a place of great proſperity, a City of Feaſting, and a place of plenty of outward enjoyments; but in this laſt Sickneſs, God hath filled it with dolorous complaints by the many breaches made by death in ſo many families and relations; God hath filled it with pale faces, and ſick perſons, and running ſores; God hath turned it into a place, an houſe of mourning. And *Solomon* ſaith, *Eccl.* 7. 2. *It is better to go into the houſe of mourning, than to the houſe of feaſting; for that is the end of all men, and the living will lay it to his heart.* Have not your houſes been houſes of mourning, ſome dead out of moſt houſes, and you are yet living; will you then lay it to your heart? What ſhould you lay

The ſecond part of the firſt Direction.

to

to heart? Lay to heart the great Judgement that hath been amongst you. Lay to heart the sins that did provoke the Lord to lay his hand so heavy upon you. Lay to heart the goodness of God in preserving you. The City hath been an house of mourning, but have you learned the lessons that are to be learned in an house of mourning? Have you met so many dead Corpse carried in the streets? have you seen the living laboring to carry forth their dead, and yet not learned the lessons that are to be learned in such a place of mourning? Where one is dead in a family, that before was an house of mirth and gladness, it will turn it into an house of mourning and sadness, much more, when many dead in one family; and this is the case of many families. God hath been teaching you many things at such a time, but is your lesson taken out? Oh, what dull Scholars are we in the School of Christ that must thus be scourged to learn our lessons, and yet have not done it? Consider, when God hath turned *London*, by reason of their dead, into an house of mourning, he hath been teaching you such things as these.

Ten Lessons to be learned in this City that hath been a great house of mourning.

I. God hath been teaching you the *Infallible verity of divine threatnings.* God threatned our first Parents, *Gen.* 2. 17. That if they sinned, they should certainly dye, they and their posterity. This threatning was made some thousands of years since, and it hath been made good in all generations. Length of time makes not voide the threatnings of God; men read Gods

Verity of divine threatnings.

Gods threatnings, but do not believe them, nor fear them, nor tremble at them. Many will not *practically* believe that they ſhall dye, though they ſin, and will not at all believe they ſhall be damned, though they ſin; but we ſee that men that have ſinned muſt dye, and wicked men ſhall feel that they ſhall be damned according to Gods threatnings, but you have learned the truth of Gods threatnings in this, and they are as true in all other reſpects; therefore do you that are Gods people, learn the truth of Gods threatnings, when he ſaith the Drunkard ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God; and let this move your heart to pity them that are ſuch, that have a threatning of God, which is of undoubted verity, as a flaming ſword ſtanding in their way to keep them out of the Paradiſe of God, and be thankful unto God that you are none of theſe. Do you learn the truth of Gods threatning, when he ſaith, the hypocrite and unbelieving ſhall be caſt into the lake that burnes with fire and brimſtone, *Rev.* 21.8. and pity and pray for them that are ſuch, and bleſs God that you are none of them, and ſo are taken from under the curſe of that threatning.

II. In this great houſe of ſo great mourning, God hath been teaching you what are the *Wages of ſin*. You have often heard that death is the Wages of ſin, *Rom.* 6. 23. The Greek word ὀψώνιον there uſed, is a military term, ſignifying the wages that is due to ſouldiers, intimating that death is as due to a ſinner for his ſervice to Deſert of ſin.

the Devil, as pay is to a Souldier for his ſervice to his General; it comes from the word ὄψον, which ſignifieth properly, all kind of pleaſant meats that may be prepared or made ready by fire, ſo that all the delicates, and dainty diſhes that ſin prepares for ſinners, hath a deaths head in them. Do you learn this, and by this learn to hate ſin more than you did before, and watch againſt it more than you did before.

Mans mortality.

III. In this great houſe of ſo great mourning, God hath been teaching you the *certainty of mens mortality*. You have ſeen that this is the way of all fleſh, *Joſh.*23.14. 1 *King.*2.2. and therefore learn to live as mortal, dying men ſhould live; you have ſeen that thouſands have been carryed from their houſes to their graves: And, Oh what manner of perſons ought you to be in all manner of holy converſation, after ſuch a ſight as this?

The worlds vanity.

IV. In this great houſe of ſo great mourning, God hath been teaching you the *worlds vanity*. You have ſeen what miſerable comforters riches are to men in time of Plague, and at an hour of death; you have ſeen death haling men from that which they had ſet their hearts upon; you have ſeen death dragging men from their riches, and from their pleaſures, and hath forced them to come away to the Bar of God, and leave their riches behinde them, and their pleaſures behind them. You have ſeen that riches could not go with them into another world, but left them in a time

time of need. You have seen that those that loved riches, could finde no comfort in them when they stood in greatest need of comfort. You have seen that what men have been laboring for, and scraping together all the time of their health and life, death hath come and scattered in a moment. Oh how weaned should you be from the world, and the riches and the pleasures thereof, after such a sight as this! Oh how much less should you afford the world, of your heart and affections, of your love, desire, and delights that is so unkind to dying men, even unto those that served it most, and loved it most. Oh do you learn to deal so with the world, as you have seen the world to deal with others, *i. e.* turn it out of your heart with as little love and pity to it, as you have seen the world turn its followers out of it, and shake them off, notwithstanding all their entreaties to abide and stay therein. The world may now entreat you, that it might stay in your heart, and live in your love; but hearken you no more to its entreaties, than it hath hearkened unto others, and you must expect the world ere long will deal with you, as it hath dealt with others; therefore *part with the world, before you leave the world.*

V. In this great house of so great mourning, God hath been teaching you the *short continuance of all relations*: you have seen death taking Husbands from their Wives, Parents from their Children, Ministers from their people, and so Wives

The uncertainty of all relations.

from their Husbands, Children from their Parents, People from their Miniſters. Thoſe that had but one onely Son. Plague and Death hath ſtripped them of him, and teared one relation out of the others boſome; fain they would have kept them, but death would not ſuffer them; they wept and cryed, but death would not have pity on them, nor hear their cries, nor regard their tears, but ſaid, this is your childe, but I muſt have him; this is your husband, but I muſt ſeize upon him; God hath given me a Commiſſion, and I always uſe to do according to the Commiſſion I receive from God, if God will not ſpare you, in vain you look for pity at mine hands. I (ſaith death) am blinde and cannot ſee the beauty of your childe, that hath drawn out your heart ſo much towards him, I am deaf and cannot hear your pleadings for the continuance of your childe, or husband, or friend; if God doth not hear you, I cannot, and if God doth not ſpare and pity you, I will not, therefore I will ſmite him, and ſtick my arrow in his heart, and dippe it in his life-blood, and take him from you. Oh how manyhave thus experienced the dealings of death! and you have ſeen it, and will not you learn to ſit looſer in your affections towards your neareſt and deareſt relations? You have ſeen death hath ſeized upon them that were moſt beloved by their friends, and perhaps did therefore do it, becauſe they were over-loved; and took up too much of that love, and that delight which ſhould have been more, and would have been better placed upon God. Your leſſon

then

then is set down by the Apostle, for I would not teach you by roat, nor without the book of Gods word, 1 *Cor.* 7. 29. *But this I say, Brethren, the time is short*, or rolled up, or contracted; a metaphor taken from a piece of cloth that is rolled up, onely a little left at the end; so some. As Mariners near the Haven winde up their sails, or make them less. When the sails of time are thus contracted, it is a sign we are near the Harbor of eternity. *It remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none*, Vers. 30. And *they that weep as though they wept not, and they that rejoyce as though they rejoyced not; and they that buy as though they possessed not, and they that use this world as not abusing it, for the fashion of this world passeth away.*

καιρὸς συνεσταλμένος When they set forth to Sea, *Vela dant*, when they have done their voyage, *vela contrahunt.*

VI. In this great house of so great mourning, God hath been teaching you the lesson of *humility*. How many humbling sights have you seen? every Corpse that you have seen hath been an humbling sight. It may be you have been proud of your beauty, but have not you seen that beauty vanisheth away when death comes; that beautiful bodies by the *Plague* and *Death* have been turned into loathsome bodies? and those that you have loved and been delighted to look upon, you have been glad to have them buried out of your sight, when once dead. How many open Graves have you seen, and those that have been nice and curious of their comely bodies, have been interred, and given to be meat for worms, and to be a prey to rottenness and putrefaction. Have you

Humility.

seen any difference betwixt the poor and the rich, betwixt that body that was fed with courser fare, and that which was nourished with more delicate dishes? Have you not seen bodies that were made out of dust, been turned to the dust, to be turned into dust, and will you be proud after God hath taken such an effectual course to teach you to be humble?

Parity in out-ward afflictions.

VII. In this great house of so great mourning, God hath been teaching you, *that all things fall alike to all*, that the wise must dye as well as the fool, and the good must dye as well as the bad. And though God hath promised [conditionally] preservation from the Plague unto his people, which hath been *literally* fulfilled to some of his, yet some of his have fallen in this general mortality, God hath been teaching of you, that though grace doth deliver from eternal death, yet not from temporal; though from the *sting*, yet not from the *stroke* of death, that you (though godly) should be preparing for your own departure out of this world.

Difference in the manner.

VIII. In this great house of so great mourning, God hath been teaching you the *difference betwixt the death of the wicked and the death of the righteous*, that though good and bad alike have dyed, yet they have not dyed alike. But as there was a difference in their life, so God did make a difference in their death: Have not you seen some wicked dye without any sense of sin, or fear

fear of God, or Hell? and some with terrors in their consciences? and have you not seen some godly dye with peace and comfort, and giving good evidences of their hope of a better life? that God hath filled them with joys that they were going to their Fathers house? and that the plague and death had not so much in them to terrifie and affright, as the hopes of heaven had to comfort and support their hearts. It hath been ground of great rejoycing to hear: how many of Gods people in *this plague* did dye with joy and comfort? And should not you by such a sight as this, be quickened in your service unto God, and ever while you live look upon Religion as a *real* thing, that letteth in such *real* comforts into their hearts, who had *real* grace, in such time of *real* discouragements; after such a sight as this, never think it a vain thing to serve God (though you must dye) who comforts his peoples souls in the very gates of death?

IX. In this great house of so great mourning, God hath been teaching you the *folly of delaying* in the great concernments of another world; you have seen many Drunkards did delay to repent and turn to God, but when death once came to Arrest them, it would not stay till they had done their work. Have not you seen many have been surprized by death; that those that thought they would repent hereafter, and talked how they would mend hereafter, are gone down into the grave before that time was come? and will not you after such a sight as this be quickned to Folly of delays.

make more haſte in doing of the work that God expecteth at your hands? Have not you ſeen ſome that have talked what they would do the next year, laid in the duſt before this year is paſt and gone? God hereby would have you learn not to boaſt of to morrow, becauſe you know not what may be in the womb of another day, nor what to morrow may bring forth, *Prov.* 27. 1. God would have you learn *ſo to number your days that you may apply your hearts to wiſdom*, *Pſal.* 90. 12. God would have you learn to do your duty quickly, and to do it with all your might, becauſe it will be too late, when you are rotting in your Grave, *Eccleſ.* 9. 10.

Mortification.

X. In this great houſe of ſo great mourning, God hath been teaching you the great leſſon of *Mortification*; you have ſeen how many dyed by ſin, and ſhould not you be now dead unto ſin, you ſhould now in good earneſt labor for the death of ſin. O be the death of your paſſion, and be the death of your luſts, and be the death of your worldlineſs, eſpecially be the death of your beloved ſin, God forbid that ſin ſhould be found alive in your heart after ſuch a time of death to ſo many thouſand perſons. Are ſo many dead and rotting in their Graves, and ſhall not ſin be dead and mouldring in your hearts.

Theſe be ſome of the leſſons God in his late providence hath been inſtructing you in, and if you can now do theſe duties better than before, it is ſome ſign that you are better than you were before, But yet becauſe ſo great a providence

ſhould

should not be sleightly passed over, with *but a little* Improvement, I shall take occasion to press you to be *much* better than you were before; before, God saw a great deal of sin in his own people, and amongst Professors, much censoriousness, and rash and uncharitable judgeing one of another, want of love and affection, a great deal of pride in Apparel, pride in Diet, pride in Furniture of houses, pride of Beauty, pride of Parts and Gifts; and God hath been staining the pride of all Families therein. God saw a great deal of neglect of Family Duties in Professors houses, and customary, cold and dead performance of them in others, and doth it not concern all to see where they have failed, and do so no more?

Sect. XVII.

I Know the wicked World thinks that professing people are too exact already, and that they make more adoe than is needfull: But their Charge is,

1. False; for there is no man is so exact in his life as he ought.

2. Blasphemous; for what do such but blame God himself in giving such strict rules unto his people.

3. Malicious; *Cain* envyed *Abel* because his works were evil, and his brothers good.

4. Diabolical; what could a Devil say more, or what is this but to play the Devils part, in discou-

discouraging, discountenancing, speaking against the pressing after the highest degrees of goodnesse.

But let it be your great care whom God hath spared from the grave in this time of *Plague*, that are such as truely fear God, and are truely good: Oh take heed, that after such a preservation none of you might be found worse than you were; for though those that once were truely good, shall never so decline as to be [absolutely] bad, yet they may so farre fail, that they may [comparatively] be sayd to be worse. Here consider,

Ten Aggravations of Gods Peoples sin, if they be worse.

1. To lose any degrees of Goodness and Grace, is *a grievous and a sinfull loss*: If you had lost your life in this Plague, it might not have been your sin, but you cannot be in the least degree worse than you were (after such a providence) but it is a great sin: Because it is our duty to love God as much as we can, therefore to lose any degrees of our love to God, is to come short of our Duty, and therefore a sin.

2. To be worse in your spiritual condition, will be *great unthankefulnesse to God* for his watchfull Providence over you. If a man do a kindness for you, will you be worse towards him than you were before? And will you deal worse with God than with a fellow Creature?

3. To be worse in your spiritual condition after such preservation and deliverance, will be *displeasing unto God, and a grief unto him*. If God

God see his Children love him less, and fear him less, and delight in him less, will it not grieve him, and displease him? And had it not been better you had dyed, than to live to be a grief to God? Had not you rather follow your Children to their graves, than to see them live to be worse, and dishonour God? and will you yet do so your selves? Is it not a grief to you, the more kindness you shew unto your Children, to see them the more undutiful to you? and will it not be so in you to God?

4. If you be worse than you were in your spiritual condition, *you shall have less communion with God than you had before: and had not you better dye than lose your communion with God?* for what is your life without fellowship with God?

5. If you be worse, *you will have less Comfort from God than you had before.* If you deny Duty to him, which you performed to him before, he will deny that comfort to you, which he gave you before, and what will your life be, without the comforts of God let down into your soul? is not his loving kindness better than life? *Psal.* 63. 3. and what is life if you have no comfort in it? and where will you have solid, lasting, suitable, satisfying comfort, if not from God?

6. If you are worse in your spiritual condition than you were before, and love God less, and desire after him less, and delight in him less, *you will have less Evidences for Heaven than you had before,* you will not so clearly see your

your Interest in Christ, your title to his Kingdom, as you did before; and do you live to blot your Evidences? Oh what an aggravation will it be to you, to say, before the Plague I knew that God did love me, but now I doubt of it. Before I knew, if I had dyed I should have been saved, but now if I should dye, I cannot tell.

7. If you are worse than you were, you will *have less experience of the workings of God upon your heart, than you had before.* You will not have such experience of his quickning presence, nor of the powerful Operations of the Spirit upon your heart; and what is it, if you feel the motions and acting of life, if you do not feel the motions of the Spirit so much upon your heart?

8. If you are worse, you *will dishonour God more than you did before*, and that you need not do, you did that too much before: And hath God spared you to live to his dishonour? I tell you, *you had better dyed with others in the Plague, than live after it to dishonour God.*

9. If you have less of goodness than you had before, *you will have more of sin than you had before.* If you love God less than you did, you will love something else more than you did; if you have less faith, you will have more unbelief; if you be less heavenly, you will be more worldly; if you be less spiritual, you will be more carnal: And hath God been using physick to purge out your sin, and shall it be found more in you than it was before? Hath God put

you

you in the Furnace, and doth your droſs continue, and increaſe? It is the nature of contraries, the leſs there is of the one, the more there is of the other. If the Sun be ſetting, darkneſs is approaching; if heat be expelled out of the water, more cold is introduced; and ſo it is with your heart in reſpect of ſin and grace.

10. If you be worſe, it *will coſt you much pains, and prayers, and tears, before you will recover to be as good as you were before.* You may loſe that with a little neglect, which you will not re-gain without great diligence. Thus I have laid before you theſe Conſiderations, to prevent your being worſe: But that will not be a *ſufficient* Improvement of this Providence, that you be not worſe in your ſpiritual condition, but you *muſt* be better: Not enough, that you do not decline, but you muſt increaſe and thrive in grace and goodneſs. And before I come to preſs you to be better, let me lay down theſe following Poſitions; and the laſt ſhall bring me to my intended Work.

Sect. XVIII.

Poſit. 1. THere are many that are *really* bad, and not ſo much as *ſeemingly* good. There are many that do not profeſs any goodneſs; ſuch are your open, debaucht ſinners, that give themſelves up unto all Licentiouſneſs and ſin.

Poſit. 2.

Posit. 2. That there are many that are *seemingly good*, that are not *really good*. Many make a great shew in Religion, that have no Religion in them. Many pray much, and hear much, and talk of good things much, but are not good themselves; and the misery of these is,

1. That they lose all their labour; for if they themselves be not good, their praying is not good, and their talking of good things is not good: For, *the sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination unto the Lord*, Prov. 15. 8.

2. They have no real Communion with God who are but seemingly good: For, *what communion hath light with darkness*, 2 Cor. 6. 13, &c.

3. They shall have no *real* reward, in the Kingdom of Heaven. Their goodness is but seeming goodness, and their happiness is but seeming happiness.

4. They are *seemingly* like to God, but are *really* like the Devil.

5. They associate with Gods Children, but are none of Gods Children; for all Gods Children are good.

6. They have no true peace, *Isa.* 57. 21. But God hath *really* preserved you from death, and *really* kept you alive, therefore be not satisfied to be seemingly good, but be *really* so.

Posit. 3. That there be many that are *really* good, that are not *gradually* good, that have grace in truth, that have not grace in growth. *Those that are seemingly good are not so many as those that are openly bad, and those that are really*

really good are not ſo many as thoſe that are ſeemingly good, and thoſe that are gradually good are not ſo many as thoſe that are really good. Ever the better the fewer, both for kinde and degree. It is ſo in Naturals; not ſo many Whales as leſſer Fiſh; not ſo many Eagles as little Birds; not ſo many Suns as Stars: And ſo it is in Spirituals; not ſo many ſtrong men in Chriſt, as babes; not ſo many tall Cedars, as there are Shrubs in Gods *Lebanon*. Now my purpoſe is to exhort you (eſpecially after ſuch a Providence) to be not only really good, but to be gradually good.

Poſit. 4. That thoſe that are *gradually* good, are yet *imperfectly* good, as appears by the remainders of ſin in the beſt; and would be evident by a particular enumeration of their Graces, which is the beſt thing in the beſt men; they know but in part, and they love but in part, and delight in God but imperfectly, *Philip.* 3. 9, 10, 11, 12.

Poſit. 5. Thoſe that are really good though *imperfectly good*, are truly *acceptable* unto God. God will not break the bruiſed Reed, nor quench the ſmoaking Flax, *Mat.* 12. 20. There may be a great deal of ſmoak where there is but little fire, a great deal of ſin where there is but little grace; but yet it is pleaſing unto God, if it be true; a little grace is of great value, (a Pearl of ſmall quantity might be of great worth) and better than a great deal of riches, or of gifts; better than a ſtrong Memory-pregnant phantacy, ſolid Judgement, quick Apprehenſion, voluble Tongue,

Tongue, or any such things; because the least Grace is a pledge of Heaven, and so are none of all the rest.

Posit. 6. That when a good man doth increase in goodness, he increaseth more or less *in all saving* goodness. When any one sin is more mortified, every sin is in some measure more mortified, and yet every sin is not equally strong, because some sins are more deeply radicated, have been more strengthened by frequent acts, and are more rooted in the constitution; so though addition be made in every Grace, when a Christian growes better, yet every grace might not be equally strong in the same Christian, because some grace may be more opposed by the contrary sin, and some grace is drawn forth more into act and exercise than the rest; yet as a Childe growes in all parts truely though not equally; so it is in a good Christian: And this I adde, that you may endeavour to be universally good, and universally better, better in Faith, and better in Love, and Humility, &c.

Posit. 7. That those that are good should labour to be *better*, and those that are better, should strive to be *best*. You should not rest in goodness positive, but labour to have comparative goodness, and when you have it in the comparative degree, you should aspire after superlative goodness: You see it is so in other things; amongst Scholars men strive who should be the best Scholar; and amongst Artificers, men strive who shall be the best Artificer; and now after the

the *Plague*, you will perceive men to be more earnest in their Trading (I pray God they may not exceed) to re-gain, what they lost for want of Trading: And so amongst Christians, every one should strive who should be the best; and to quicken and provoke you hereunto, lay these things to your heart. Consider,

Sect. XIX.

Seventeen Arguments to Gods People to be better.

1. YOu *are not so good as once you were*; I mean in your Primitive condition and first creation, we had more goodness as we came out of the hands of God; then we had good and no evil: And when God hath restored us, we should labour to come up as near to what we were in *Adam*, (though not by the same Covenant) as we can.

2. You are *not so good as you shall be*. You were good in *Adam*, but you shall be better in Heaven: In *Adam* we were perfectly good, in Heaven we shall be perpetually good; and should you not labour to get as much of Heaven into your heart as you can.

3. You *are not so good as you ought to be*, no, not by many degrees; you come farr short of what you should be in grace and goodness.

4. You *are not so good as you may be*: Though you cannot be so good as you were in *Adam*, as you shall be in Heaven, as you ought to be upon earth, yet you *may* be better than you are. You have not so many degrees of love to God, but you *may* have more, nor such strong desires

after Christ, but you may have more: How weak is thy love! how cold are thy desires! how stupid is thy heart! not only in comparison of what it ought to be, but of what it may be: Thou wanteſt many degrees, Oh Chriſtian, *put on*, there is much more that is yet attainable.

5. You *are not ſo good, but you need to be better.* If thou be no better, and ſhouldſt come into ſome conditions, thou wouldeſt be found not good enough to go through the ſame as becomes the Goſpel. Thou mighteſt be brought into thoſe ſtraits, and aſſaulted by thoſe temptations, that except thou haſt more Patience, more Love to God, more Faith in Chriſt, thou wilt not be able to bear them, nor reſiſt them, as becomes a Childe of God to doe: Thy burdens might yet be greater, and thy Duties greater, and thy Temptations greater, therefore thou ſhouldeſt haſten to be better.

6. You *are not ſo good as others are*, that have had but the ſame time, and the ſame means, and Helps as you have had, nay ſome that have not had ſo much preaching as you have had, nor ſuch Examples as you have had, nor ſo much time, that did ſet out for Heaven after you, that were bad while you were good, yet have overtaken you, and gone beyond you: Oh Chriſtian, thou art lagging behinde, *put on*, leaſt thou ſhouldeſt be laſt of all.

7. You *are not ſo good, but you are as bad.* You have not ſo much grace, but you have as much ſin; nay, is not your ſin more than your grace? is not your unbelief more than your faith? and your

your wandring thoughts in duty more than your fixed thoughts in duty? and your dulneſs more than your livelineſs? If thou canſt ſay truely, it is not, do thou go and bleſs God that it is not ſo with thee, while I muſt go and be humbled before God, becauſe it is ſo with me.

8. The *better you are, the more excellent you will be.* Riches is not your excellency, and Learning is not your excellency, and Grace is not your *utmoſt* and your higheſt excellency, but the higheſt degrees of Grace is. Reaſon makes a man differ from a beaſt; and the more rational a man is (by the improvement of Reaſon) than others, the more excellent as a man (for a Fool might excell a Wiſe man in riches) he is above other men: So Grace makes a Chriſtian differ from a man *as ſuch*, and the better Chriſtian he is than others, the more excellent he is than other Chriſtians are.

9. The *better you are, the more like to God*, who is the greateſt, the chiefeſt, and the beſt good. When we loſt our goodneſs, we loſt our likeneſs unto God; and when God makes us good, he makes us like himſelf, and the better God doth make us, the more he makes us like himſelf: And ſhould not this provoke thee to be better? eſpecially conſidering, to be moſt like to God, is

Thy greateſt
- Duty: The end of all the reſt.
- Deſires: Oh that I were more like to God.
- Dignity: And therefore our dignity will be greateſt in Heaven, becauſe there we ſhall be likeſt unto God.

10. The *better you are, the more you ſhall have Gods approbation*: And what will it be to be approved of God! You may by ſeeming goodneſſe have the approbation of men, but you muſt be really good, if you will have the approbation of God; and the better you are, the more he will approve you. God obſerveth the worſt of men, but approveth only of good men; and only the good actions of good men, not their ſinful actions, 1 *King.* 15. 5.

11. The *better you are, the more clearly you will ſee that you are good.* Many queſtion, they are not good, and the reaſon of their doubt is, becauſe they are no better: That time you ſpend in complaining you fear you are not good, improve in endeavouring to be better, and your doubts will be ſooner anſwered, and your fear expelled.

12. The *better you are, the more profitable you will be to all about you.* The better you are in your ſelf, the better it will be for your ſelf, and the better for all about you; the better you are, the more you will lay out your ſelf for God, and for the good of ſouls. Others ſhall be the better,

For your Counſels: You will be directing them how to do good.

For your Reproofs: You will be telling them when they do evil.

For your Example: You will lead them in the good Way.

For your Experiences: You will communicate to them how good God hath been unto you, and what God hath done for you.

13. The

13. The *better you are, the more inward joy, and the more established peace you shall finde.* The great trouble of a Christian is, because he is no better; be you better and you will have the lesser trouble within, though the better you are, the more trouble you might have from men; but thats not so great matter.

14. The *better you are, the more glory you will bring to God. Herein is my father glorified that you bear much fruit,* Joh. 15. 8. And what is your design in the world, but to glorifie God, and to do that, and be that which tendeth most thereunto?

15. The *better you are, the more you will credit Religion,* and realize the wayes of God; it will appear that Religion is a real thing, when it hath made bad men good, and good men better. If there were nothing else to disgrace the ways of sin, this would be abundantly sufficient to behold the great wickedness of those men (how bad they be) that walk most therein.

16. The *better you are while you live, the more undaunted you shall be when you come to dye*: The reason why we are so troubled in our sickness, is because we were no better in our health; conscience then remembers at such a time I sinned, and at such a place I fell, and in such company I defiled my soul; be better in Health, you will be the better in sickness and death.

17. The *better you are upon earth, the weightier your crown shall be in heaven*: Those that be truly good, shall have sure glory, but those that are better, shall have more. There shall be no want

of any thing to any one in heaven, but yet some shall shine more eminently in glory, than others.

Thus I have dispatched this particular also, that you be better after such a *signal* providence as this, for if you be not, this very thing will be a greater Plague, than the Plague upon the body; and if you ask me wherein you should be better? you must gather up that in the following Directions, which shall be more particular; and such as may be useful to prevent men from growing worse, which was the first thing, and helpful to promote this duty of being better, which was the second thing I have spoken to.

DIRECTION II.

Perform your purpose, pay your vows.

HAth God spared you in time of Plague, that you live in some measure answerably to so great a mercy, *carefully endeavour to live up to the purposes, and resolutions and vows which you made to God in time of danger and distress.* Good purposes and holy resolutions, when observed and put in practice, are great helps to an answerable return to God for his mercies conferred upon us; but holy, Religious vows, being something more than single purposes and resolutions (*being a promise made to God with due deliberation, of something lawful in it self, and in our power to perform, as a testi-*

teſtimony of our thankefulneſs unto God for ſome extraordinary mercy received, or expected, or deliverance from ſome great evil in extraordinary danger and diſtreſs) do much promote a holy life, whereby we may the better be inabled to walk in ſome meaſure worthy of what the Lord in mercy hath done for us, or given to us. In time of extraordinary danger, or when we are in expectation of ſome extraordinary Mercy, we have the example of the holy men of God in Scripture, to binde our ſelves to endeavour to walk more cloſe with God. So *Jacob*, *Gen.* 28. 20. *And Jacob vowed a vow, ſaying, if God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on.* Verſ. 21. *So that I come again to my fathers houſe in peace, then ſhall the Lord be my God.* And this he was careful to perform, *Gen.* 35. 2. *Then Jacob ſaid unto his houſhold, and to all that were with him, put away the ſtrange gods, and be clean, and change your garments.* Verſ. 3. *And let us ariſe and go up to Bethel, and I will make there an altar unto God, who anſwered me in the day of my diſtreſs, and was with me in the way which I went.* Thus *David* made a vow to God when he was in danger of his life, *Pſal.* 56. 12. *Thy vows are upon me, O God: I will render praiſes unto thee.* Verſ. 13. *For thou haſt delivered my ſoul from death*—And in the like danger, *Pſal.* 116. 3. *The ſorrows of death compaſſed me, and the pains of hell gate hold upon me: I found trouble and ſorrow.* Verſ. 4. *Then called I upon the name of the Lord, O Lord, I beſeech thee deli-*

ver my soul. Vers. 6. *The Lord preserveth the simple: I was brought low, and he helped me:* Vers. 8. *Thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling.* Vers. 12. *What shall I render to the Lord, for all his benefits towards me?* Vers. 14. *I will pay my vows unto the Lord, now in the presence of all his people.*

And hath not this been thy case, *Christian Reader*, did not the sorrows of death compass thee about? Didst thou not finde trouble and sorrow? Wast thou not brought very low, and received the sentence of death within thy self? Didst thou not then call upon the name of the Lord, and resolve thou wouldst walk before the Lord, if he would restore thee? and hath not God delivered thy soul from death, and thy feet from falling? Then pay thy vows to God, and perform to him thy promise, and live up unto thy resolutions.

Tell me, what were thy purposes when thou heardest the Plague had entered into thy Neighbours house, when it came unto the family nearest unto thine? What were thy resolutions when the Plague did enter into thy house, and took one away, and then another? What were thy holy, deliberate, lawful vows, when it seized upon thy body? When thou betookest thy self unto thy bed, to sweat out thy distemper? When thou foundest Risings on thy Body, Swellings and Carbuncles in several parts, when the apprehensions of death did fill thy minde, and the terrors of the Lord did fill thy heart, when thou though-

thoughteſt thou hadſt not many days to live, and that thou wert near to death and another world, and ſhouldeſt certainly dye, if God did not preſerve thee? What didſt thou think then? And what didſt thou purpoſe then, and reſolve upon then? Didſt thou not determine with thy ſelf if God would ſpare thy life, if God would give thee health again, and try thee a little longer in the world, that thou wouldeſt walk more holily, and act for God more zealouſly? That thou wouldeſt pray more frequently and more fervently? That thou would minde the world leſs, and heaven more? That thou wouldeſt make Religion thy buſineſs, as long as thou ſhouldeſt live? Didſt thou not reſolve that God and Chriſt, and things above ſhould have more of thy heart and hearty love? That thou wouldeſt then forſake looſe and carnal company, and aſſociate thy ſelf with thoſe in whom thou couldſt diſcern moſt of God, and walked moſt conſcientiouſly before him? That thou wouldeſt no more take *a cup too much*, nor club in the Alehouſe and Tavern, to the neglect of duties of thy family at home. Did it not then trouble thee that thou being a Profeſſor, hadſt been at nights *drinking in the Tavern*, when thou ſhouldſt have been *praying in thy family*; that thy Wife and Children, though they have not gone Supperleſs to bed, yet have almoſt every night gone prayerleſs to bed, except they went apart to pray in ſecret. But did not then thy conſcience tell thee, that their performance of their duty would be no excuſe to thee, when thou ſhouldſt ſtand

at

at the Bar of God, for thy neglecting of what thou oughtest to have done? Didst thou not then resolve, if thou shouldst live, it should be so no more? That thou wouldst read thy Bible more, as well as look over thy Shop-books daily? That thou wouldst spend some time in secret before God, whereas before thou wast use to waste it in thy pleasures, and taking of thy worldly delights.

Deal plainly, *man*, with thy self, and do not flatter thy soul, and daube with thy conscience, Was there not some such thoughts and purposes, and resolutions as these in thy heart at such a time? And didst thou promise and resolve in jest, and not in earnest; God did afflict thee by the plague *in good earnest*, and thou waste then affraid of death, and the grave, and judgement, *in good earnest!* And didst thou only purpose *in jest*, and resolve in jest, and play with holy things when thou wast near another world? and dally with God, when thou didst not know but within an hour thou mightest have appeared at his Bar? and been set before the terrible tribunal of the great heart-searching God? But if thou wast in earnest with God, when God was in earnest with thee; if thou wast in earnest in promising, be *earnest in earnest* to perform; if thou didst indeed resolve to reform when thou shouldst be well, then reform indeed according to thy resolution, since God hath made thee well, and saved thee from the Grave, to which thou wast so near, so very near.

Or

Or if God hath been ſo good to thee to preſerve thee from the infection of the Plague, amongſt the many thouſands that have been viſited, that thou haſt not been heart-ſick, yet thou haſt often felt ſhootings, and pains, and prickings up and down in ſeveral parts of thy body; and ſometimes haſt had ſuch things as thou haſt thought to be ſymptomes of the diſtemper, and haſt apprehended it to be approaching to thee, that hath made thee haſten to thy bed, and make uſe of thy preſervatives, and thy cordials, that thou thoughteſt thy ſelf in real danger, and waſt poſſeſt with real fears: What were thy purpoſes at ſuch a time as this? And what didſt thou reſolve to do? And how to live, if God would prevent the thing thou feareſt? Or hadſt thou no ſuch purpoſe in thy heart? No ſuch reſolution in thy breaſt, that if thou livedſt thou wouldſt be better? Was thy heart indeed ſo backward unto good, that at ſuch a time of fears and dangers, thou hadſt not ſo much as a purpoſe to be better? but if thou hadſt (and let thy conſcience be thy witneſs, and the God of heaven that did fully know the purpoſe of thy heart) then now perform, what then thy heart did purpoſe to perform.

I am perſwaded if the people in *London* (and in Country too) would live up according to the purpoſe of their heart, in time of danger of the Plague, would reform and mend as they did reſolve to do, we ſhould be much better than we were before. Oh what a difference would there be in the frame of our hearts, and in the courſe of

of our lives! What a change would there be in all our practises? Those that were forward Professors of Religion, and were not *much more* then Professors, would be zealous practisers of Religious duties; and in order hereunto I shall to follow this direction, do three things.

1. Lay down some considerations why you should be careful to keep your purposes, resolutions and vows.

2. Prescribe some helpes how you may perform your purposes, resolutions and vows.

3. Set down the aggravations of your sin, if you break your purposes, resolutions and vows.

Sect. I.

Seven Arguments for care to keep our resolutions made in time of fear and sickness.

I. GReat and constant diligent care should be taken in time of health, to keep our purposes, to perform our resolutions, and to pay our vows to God, which we made in time of sickness, and danger, and distress, if you consider these particulars.

The heart is deceitful

1. That *one great deceit of the heart of man doth appear in this, in being forward to purpose in our selves, and promise unto God, but are backward to perform.* In time of sickness, what resolutions do men make? what purposes have they in themselves, to mend and turn to God, and seem to promise this with tears in their eyes, and sorrow in their hearts, for the evil that is

paſt and done, and ſeem to others, and think verily themſelves, that they promiſe in good earneſt, and mean to do as they do ſpeak, and when they think the danger is paſt, and their fears removed, do nothing leſs than what they promiſed: I have known ſome upon ſick beds ſo to promiſe, that they would be drunk no more, *&c.* and yet when health hath been reſtored, have returned to their wickedneſs: So did *Pharaoh* promiſe fair when the Plagues of God were upon the Land, that he would let the children of *Iſrael* goe; but when the Plagues have been removed, he hath hardened his heart againſt them more than before; and this he often did. *Exod.* 8. 8, 15. & 9. 27, 28, 34, & 10. 16, 17, 20.

Now this deceitfulneſs of the heart is yet in part remaining in the beſt of men, and therefore you muſt be carefull, elſe though you have promiſed, you will never perform.

2. That *ſin is of a bewitching, encroaching and alluring nature*; if it can prevail, it will keep you from reſolving againſt it; if you do reſolve, it will entreat you that you would not ſend it *farre* from you, that your Reſolution might not be *peremptory* and *univerſal*, that if you reſolve to baniſh it from your heart, it might be *only ſome* of its members that are not ſo dear unto you, and reſerve the reſt; or if it be peremptory and univerſal, that you will part with all ſin, it will contend that your Reſolution may not be *perpetual*, that you ſend it not away for ever,

Sin is encroaching.

ever, but only till your danger of death is over, and your fears thereof are ceaſed, that then it may be received into your heart, be your Favourite again; or if you do reſolve to part with ſin, peremptorily, univerſally and perpetually, yet after a while it will ſolicit you to *change* your reſolution; or if you will not change it, it will ſolicit you to *abate* the ſtrength and vehemency thereof; and will come and offer you ſo much delight, and ſo much pleaſure, and ſo much profit, if you will not be ſo ſevere againſt it. If you are not carefull, it *will encroach upon your heart*, and inſinuate and winde it ſelf into your love and delight, and allure your will into a conſent, firſt not to be ſo *ſevere*, next to *indulge* it, then to *countenance* it, and then to renew its acquaintance, till it again become familiar to you.

Satan will aſſault.

3. That *Satan will aſſault you, and ſet in with ſin for its re-admiſſion.* If he cannot keep you from reſolving, yet he will lay hard at your heart to break your reſolution: He will lay his ſnares and baits, and uſe his ſtratagems in ſins behalf; and come to you as he did to our firſt Parents, *Gen.* 3. 1. *He* (i. e. Satan) *ſaid unto the woman, Yea, hath God ſaid, ye ſhall not eat of every tree of the Garden?* So Satan cometh unto thee, and ſaith, Yea, haſt thou ſaid, thou wilt not be kinde unto thy ſin any more? haſt thou ſaid, thou wilt be ſo ſevere againſt thine Iniquity? If thou reply, I have ſaid, I will not keep my ſin, leſt God

God be angry with me, and send some sorer Judgement upon me; he will return to thee, and say, God will *not surely* be angry with thee to plague thee, it *may be* thou mayst escape, or if thou yield now, thou mightest repent, and renew thy resolution against it again, do it but this once, take but the *other Cup*; play but the other *game*. If you be not carefull to look to your Resolutions, when sin, Satan, and your own heart do set against you, you will certainly break them.

---

4. *The World will interrupt you, that you may not live up to your Resolutions made to God in time of danger.* This is another powerful Assaultant, for your heart and affections; and will plead, If thou didst resolve against sin, that was unlawful, but the things that I have (saith the World) are good, my Riches are good, and my Pleasures are not absolutely evil, and my Profits are not unlawful; if thou wouldest turn off thy drunkenness, why should I be resolved against? and if thou wilt shake off thy wicked company, yet what have I done, that I must not be loved? Company-keeping (saith the World) did impoverish thee, but I will enrich thee, that did consume what was necessary for thy Family, but I come with supplyes for them, I will cloathe their backs, and I will furnish their Table, and I will bring in Portions for thy Children, I will make thee honourable and esteemed, and I will lay up in store for thee against thy old age, when

The world will interrupt.

when thy labour will be past: Thus will the World come in for entertainment in your heart again, that though you resolved to spend so much time in secret Prayer every day, if God would suffer you to live, yet this worldly business cometh to divert you, and another cometh to take you off from your resolved practice: If you consider what earnest suiters, Satan, sin, and the World will be for your heart, and how your heart is as ready to yield, as these are to solicit, your heart is as willing to have them, as these are to have your heart, then without diligent care it is impossible to live up unto good and holy Resolutions made in time of danger.

5. *The difficulty of the things you have purposed and resolved to do, calls for your greatest diligence if you would live up unto them.* The more excellent and difficult the work is we resolve to do, the more apt we are to flag and faint, and come short in performance. Now it will appear that these things are difficult, because

They are { *Præter* / *Super* / *Contra* } *Naturam.*

First, The things you have purposed and resolved to do, are *preternatural*. These things are, that you will love God more, and that you will delight and joy in God more. Now those things are præternatural which are added to another thing

thing (as an adjunct to its subject) so that it doth not constitute the nature of it, nor destroy it, but perfect it. Such a thing is Grace, that you have resolved to get greater degrees of. Grace and Holiness doth not constitute the Nature of man, for a man without grace is a man; neither doth grace and holiness destroy but perfect Nature: Grace doth not destroy the affection of Love, but doth correct it, and place it upon its proper Object; nor destroy our Joy, but turns the stream of our Joy to empty it self in God, or rather to fetch our Joyes from God.

Secondly, The things you have resolved to do, are *supernatural*, above Nature; it is not in the power of Nature to enable you to do what you have resolved upon. You resolved in your time of fears and danger, to pray to God more fervently; but Nature cannot help you to do this: To believe more stedfastly, to love God more ardently, to walk with God more holily, but all these are above the power of Nature; and must be wrought in you by the supernatural and almighty power of God; and yet you did well to resolve to endeavour to do all these, if you did remember to make your resolution, in the strength of Christ to do this, by whose strength we can do all things, *Philip.* 4. 13.

Thirdly, The things you have resolved to do are *contra-natural*, against Nature, *i. e.* against corrupt nature: For our love to God doth not destroy the faculty or affection of Love, but per-

fect it and Innoble it, but it doth deſtroy our love to ſin, and our love to the World, and the things of the World. Now to do that which is againſt corrupt Nature is very hard, you will finde it exceeding difficult, it is ſwimming againſt the ſtream, and rowing againſt the tide, that if you do not ply your Oar, you will be carryed back.

You will meet with oppoſition.

6. *The oppoſition you may meet withall from your neareſt Friends, will make it evident that there is need of your greateſt diligence to make good your good reſolutions.* You have purpoſed in your heart to ſpend more time for God, and your ſoul, and for the life to come, if you do ſo as you have reſolved, it may be thy father, the Wife of thy boſom, thy fellow-ſervants, will ſcorn thee and deride thee, and ſet themſelves againſt thee. Thou haſt purpoſed in thy heart to reprove ſinners for their Oathes and Drunkenneſs, and Prophaneneſs, and if thou do ſo, they will envy thee for thy pity, and hate thee for thy love; it may coſt thee dear, it may expoſe thee to trouble from men, and from thoſe that by bonds of Nature are neareſt to thee, if thou wilt indeed come up in thy practice in time of health and ſafety, to thy Reſolutions, which thou didſt believe was thy duty to make, in time of ſickneſs and danger.

7. *The*

7. *The necessary concurrence of many difficult duties that you may perform the purposes of your heart*, in living in some measure answerable to the mercy of divine protection in time of plague, calls for your utmost diligence and care, else you will undoubtedly fail and come short of what you did resolve upon. Where many Duties are to meet, and to be done as necessary Requisites to another duty that makes this duty so much the more difficult. There are many things to be done, if you will perform your Vows and Resolutions to be better, without which it will be impossible, and these are such as

Concurrence of many duties required.

Watchfulness,
Self-denyal,
Fervent Prayer,
Frequent Examination, *&c.*

But these I reserve for their proper place, as Helps hereunto. But first I would have you to believe the necessity of your utmost care and diligence to perform your Purposes of an holy life. *That man that thinks it easie to live up to such Resolutions, will undoubtedly come short in putting them in practice.*

Sect. II.

II. I Come to the Helps to be prescribed for the better performance of your Purposes and Resolutions of a holy, heavenly, Gospel-

Twenty Helps for keeping our Resolutions.

converſation, made in time of your danger by reaſon of the Plague. If you would live up to your Reſolution of an holy life, then

---

Watch against your Darling ſin.

1. Evermore take heed of *your Beloved ſin*; take heed of that which is to you *Peccatum in delitiis*; your darling Luſt, which by way of ſpecial propriety you may call your own. Keep a very ſtrict hand over it, for if any ſin undoe you, it is likely to be this, and if there be any ſin that will weaken your endeavours to live according to your purpoſe, it will be this: Beware of all, but *eſpecially* of this; maintain your holy warfare againſt the whole hoaſt of ſin, but eſpecially fight againſt this as the General and Commander of all the reſt: Whether it be pride, or worldlineſs, or the pleaſing of your ſenſitive Appetite, or the Luſts of the Fleſh, *&c.* That you may know what is your Darling ſin, take theſe ſigns.

Signs of a beloved ſin.

Firſt, That ſin you have been more accuſtomed to, and hath uſually broken out to the wounding of your ſoul, and diſturbing of your peace above any other ſin, is your beloved ſin.

Secondly, That ſin that all other ſins doe wait upon and vail to, and bring in their aid and aſſiſtance to maintain, is your beloved ſin.

Thirdly, That ſin of which you are moſt impatient of reproof; you can hear of other ſins, and be reproved for other ſins, but if you are plainly

plainly dealt with about this, you cannot so easily bear it, but you will finde your corrupt heart to bestir it self to finde out excuses to extenuate it, and plead for it; that is likely your beloved sin.

Fourthly, That sin is likely your Darling, when disappointments of the fulfilling, and pleasing of it, is more grievous to your soul than the frustrations of any other sin.

Fifthly, That sin is your Darling, which you have often found your heart wishing it were no sin, when you wish that it had not been forbidden by God; which you finde your heart most unwilling to resolve against.

Sixthly, That sin is your Darling, which you are willing to be at any cost and charges to maintain or satisfie.

Seventhly, That is your Darling sin, which you are most delighted in the committing of, and had rather part with all the rest than with this; it is a sign your heart is indeed marryed to that sin, when you will leave all to cleave to this.

Eighthly, That sin is your Darling sin, which doth most disturb you at the Throne of Grace, and fill your minde most usually with distracting thoughts. The Devil will divert your heart from God in holy Duties, and there is no sin he can better make use of for this purpose, than what your heart is most apt naturally to close with-all.

Ninthly, That sin is your Darling sin, which doth most interrupt you in your chosen Soli-

tudes, and Retirements for your ſouls concernment. It is not every man, but ſome ſpecial friend that will joyn himſelf unto you, when he knows you are retired for ſome ſpecial buſineſs.

Tenthly, That is your Darling ſin which Conſcience doth moſt reproach you for in time of danger and fears of death.

Eleventhly, That ſin is your Darling ſin, which uſually lies down in your thoughts at night, which your minde moſt thinks upon in the night when you wake, and firſt endeavours to ſalute you in the morning.

Whatever ſin this be, you muſt reſolve to deal ſeverely with it, if ever you would keep your holy Reſolutions: While you cocket *this* ſin, and be too kind towards it, you will not walk ſo cloſe with God in time of health, as you purpoſed to do in time of ſickneſs.

And next to this beloved ſin, be carefull to mortifie that ſin that is next unto it in your love. There is ſome other ſin, beſides the Darling (which is chief) that the corrupt heart hath ſome peculiar favour for; and if you ask what ſin that is? I anſwer, it is that ſin which your heart is moſt apt to change your beloved ſin for, when you preſs your heart to forſake your Darling ſin: And that which was the ſecond chief ſin in your Soul, would be firſt, if the former be taken down and ſuppreſſed.

And againſt Temptation.

2. Take heed of *dallying with temptations*, or playing with the baits of ſin, and be careful to abſtain

abstain from the very appearance of evil; rather deny your self of what is lawful, then play upon the borders of that which is unlawful, *If you always go as far as you may, you will sometimes go further then you should*: If you venture to the utmost, you will be in danger of transgressing and going beyond your bounds. You will finde the Devil and your own heart sometimes to reason thus, so far thou mayest go, and yet keep thy resolution; so far thou mightest venture, and maintain thy holy purpose; thou maist go with such a one into the Tavern, and yet keep thy purpose to be sober, thou mayst take another Glass of Wine, and then another, and then another, and yet not break thy resolution. Thus the Devil will play upon thee, and ply thee, step after step; till he makes a prey of the peace of thy conscience, and hath brought thee to a violation of thy purpose, *Principiis obsta*, resist the first risings of the sin thou hast resolved against; thou hast resolved to keep a constant course of secret prayer every morning, but when thou risest, there is this business offers it self to be done first, and then another, till thou dost omit it and neglect it, or there is this business which stayes for thee, and that will make thee first be slight and hasty, and over-short in the performance of it, till at last it brings thee to neglect it. Beware then of the appearances of sin.

Sin is as odious to God when you are well as when you were sick.

3. *Often press upon your heart, that sin is as odious unto God, and displeasing unto him at one*

time as another, in time of health, as well as in times of sickness and great mortality, when the plague is over, as when it was slaughtering thousands in a week. Though God doth sometimes manifest more of his displeasure against sin, yet he always equally (because he always infinitely) hateth sin. If the thoughts of Gods displeasure, and the sight thereof in the effects of it, did move thee to resolve and purpose against sin, the believing thoughts of this when the Plague is over, will have some special influence upon thee, to make thee endeavour to do according to the purpose of thy heart in dying times.

Holiness in act, pleasing to God, more than in purpose.

4. Consider, *Holiness is as pleasing unto God at one time as another, and if God was pleased with thy purpose, it will be more pleasing if thou proceed unto performance*: The moving reason of your purpose in the time of your distress, was that you judged it pleasing unto God; and would you please God at one time by purposing, and displease him at another by non-performance? Would you please God at one time by resolving to reform, and displease him at another by non-reformation? Sin and holiness is the same in the eyes of God at all times, but it seems it is not so in thine; if sometime thou dost purpose to forsake sin, and at another dost willingly commit it; if sometime thou approvest holiness, and purposest to follow after it, but at another time thou art remiss in thy pursuit.

5. Work

5. *Work this upon thy heart, that sin is as destructive to thy soul, and prejudicial to thy peace and comfort, at one time as another*: Though sometime the circumstance of time might aggravate a mans sin, and make it more hainous (as a man to be drunk upon the Lords day) yet sin committed at any time is damnable, and sin loved at any time is damnable; though sometime we feel the effects of sin, in sickness on our bodies, and terrors and fears upon our consciences, and then have greater and more affecting apprehensions of the evil of it; yet you can at no time (when you have your perfect health) lay sin in your bosom, but it may sting you unto death. In your sickness you thought that sin would undo you, that your evil actions would certainly damne you, therefore you did resolve against it; think so still, and let those thoughts abide upon your heart, and they will carry you in the strength of Christ, to live as you did purpose.

Sin is prejudicial, when you are well as when you were sick.

6. *Work this upon your heart, that holiness in act, and a godly life in act, will be more sweet unto your soul, than it was onely in your purpose*: And that a holy life should be esteemed by you at one time, as well as another, because it will be as sweet and profitable to you at one time as another; if you thought it would be for your good, to purpose holiness, and to resolve to live to God, and this did something quiet your heart, if you had dyed, that God had given you a real and unfeigned resolution, and fixed purpose of heart

Holiness in act will be sweeter to you, than onely in purpose.

to

to lead (as you could with utmoſt diligence) a Goſpel converſation, how much more will it be a comfort to your heart to ſee your purpoſes end in performances, and your reſolutions come unto a real, thorough, continued Reformation. Get the ſame thoughts of holineſs in time of ſafety, as you had in time of danger; and this will help you to live holily as well as to purpoſe ſo to do.

When you are well, you are ſtil mortal.

7 *Keep upon your heart a conſtant, daily ſenſe of your own mortality, and of your nearneſs to another world*: What is the reaſon that men under ſickneſs are more apt to purpoſe to forſake ſin, and to promiſe to mend and to reform, than in time of health, but becauſe they have greater apprehenſions of death in its nearer approaches unto them; and things *as neer* do more affect, than things apprehended as further off; and was it not the thoughts of the nearneſs of death, and your daily danger of it, that did quicken you to reſolve againſt ſin, and for God, and to winde up your reſolutions ſomething higher than at other times? Why you have reaſon ſtill to walk in daily expectation of your diſſolution, though the plague be ſtayed. If the plague be removed out of your habitation, yet ſin is not removed out of your heart; there is the meritorious cauſe of death ſtill in you, and there are natural cauſes of death ſtill in you, and you muſt as ſurely dye, as if the Plague were raging, and you may ſoon dye; we dye a thouſand ways: death might be as near to you by ſome other diſeaſe,

eaſe, and you may fall by ſome other diſeaſe, as ſo many have done by the Peſtilence; though you were not one of thoſe that dyed eight thouſand in a week; yet you may be one of thoſe that dye eight, or five hundred in a week. Doe not ſay the bitterneſs of death is paſt, that now there is no danger; do not put far from thee the evil day. What if ſo many do not dye every week as *when* thou reſolvedſt to be better, yet *thou* mighteſt dye every week. An Apoplexy, or a Feaver, or Dropſie might fetcht thee to thy grave, who haſt (through Mercy and Patience) eſcaped death by the Plague; think with thy ſelf, when thy heart is negligent of thy former purpoſe, When? and why was it that I reſolved to give my ſelf more to a holy, heavenly life? When the Plague did come nigh unto my dwelling, and becauſe I thought every day I might have dyed: Why it is my daily danger, if not by the Plague, yet by ſome other diſeaſe, that will as certainly be the cauſe of my diſſolution, as if it were the Plague. Thou didſt purpoſe, becauſe thou thoughteſt death was neer, then perform, becauſe death is ſtill as near, yea it is nearer to thee *now*, then *when* thou madeſt this reſolution; for the more days thou haſt lived ſince, the fewer now thou haſt to live; it was near then, but to thee it is nearer now.

8. *Frequently poſſeſs thy heart with ſerious believing thoughts of judgement to come.* When men, and when thou amongſt the reſt ſhall give Believe judgment to come.

an

an account to God of all, thoughts, purposes, promises, vows that thou hast made to God, to walk before him in an holy life: But what account canst thou give to God, when thou hast not performed what thou purposedst? If it was not good to purpose and to promise to forsake thy sin, and live to God, Why didst thou purpose? If it were? Why dost thou not perform? If thou fail now, thou wilt be self-condemned at the bar of God: thy purposes and promises will be brought forth against thee; and God will charge thee before all the world with breach of promise unto him.

Gods eye is upon you.

9. *Work this upon thy heart, that thou walkest daily in the sight and presence of that God that exactly doth observe, whether thou art the same in thy practice when thou art well, as thou wast in thy purpose when thou wast sick*: God did see thy purpose, and he did hear thy promise made in thy distress and time of fears; and his eye is upon thee, to observe how thou livest, and what thou dost; and do men keep their promises made to men (as some do from no other principle then) because the eyes of men are upon them, to observe them, and they would not lose their reputation by falsifying of their promise, and wilt not thou much more perform thy promise unto God, when thou canst never break it, but when God is looking on?

Keep conscience tender.

10. *Keep a lively and a tender conscience, and diligently hearken to its admonitions*, that thou keep

keep thy purpose; *cominations*, while thou art purposing to come short of thy purpose, and *accusations* afterwards; if thy conscience is not faithful unto thee, thou wilt be false unto thy promise, and fail of thy purpose; but if it be, do not choak the voice of conscience, for it is thy monitor and remembrancer to put thee in minde of the bond and obligation that lies upon thee to a holy life, by virtue of thy own resolutions and vows in time of great mortality.

---

11. *Make a prudent choise of some wise and holy Christian for thy most intimate associate*: One that knows thy ways and practise most, that is most acquainted with the manner of thy life, and hath most occasion to be most in thy company (supposing him to be faithful, prudent, pious) tell him what hath been the purpose of thy heart, when the terrors of the Lord were upon thee, not onely against sin in general, or in respect of holiness in general, but what was the purpose of thy soul, and the resolution of thy heart against this sin (if it be convenient) in particular, which thou hast been most prone unto, and the particular duty thou hast resolved to be constant and diligent in, which thou hast found thy heart most backward to; and engage him as he loves thy soul, and the promoting of the work of God in thy heart, that he will carefully observe thee, and if he discern thee to be backward to thy duty, that he would admonish thee, if forward to thy sin, that he would reprove thee; and in all deal

Choose a choise friend.

deal faithfully with thee; this would be an exceeding help to perform our promises and purposes of holy living; and such a friend as this is to be prized above his weight in gold; and such a friend as this, is better than a brother, if you finde him, let him not go.

Gods purpose always the same to you.

12. *Seriously consider and work upon your heart, till you feel your soul affected with it, that Gods purposes concerning you and your good, and eternal peace is the same at one time as at another, and he performes all his promises which he maketh unto you*: God doth not one time purpose for to save you, and another time purpose to condemn you; and why should you then be unconstant in your purposes towards God, one time to purpose that you will serve him more, and glorifie him more, and at another time be careless to order your life according to the intention of your heart. When you finde your hearts begin to slink, and goe from the purpose and promise that you have made, press your self with affecting thoughts of the Immutability of Gods purposes to you, and this might help you to constancy in your purposes towards God.

Holy courage.

13. *Steel your heart with an holy courage against all oppositions in your way of performance*: Take heed of slavish fears which enfeeble your resolutions, and put a stop in the way of an holy life you have resolved upon; fear of danger and of death made you to resolve to keep close to God, and yet your fear of death, and fear

fear of danger for holineſs ſake, will hinder your living up to thoſe Purpoſes and Reſolutions. Fear of death natural and from God, was the occaſion of your reſolving to practiſe an holy life; but fears of death violent, and from men, will be the cauſe of your breach of promiſe ſo to doe: Therefore reſolve to live up to your Reſolutions, though loſs of Eſtate, Liberty, or Life, ſhould attend you for ſo doing.

---

14. *Fill your heart with an holy Zeal for Gods glory*; and if you be zealous for the glory of God, you will be couragious againſt all Impediments and Obſtructions of an holy converſation. Courage is oppoſed to ſlaviſh Fears, and Zeal is oppoſed to Lukewarmneſs: And Lukewarmneſs is inconſiſtent with the practice you have reſolved upon. You have purpoſed to pray more fervently than you were wont to do, but if your heart be as lukewarm in Religion, you cannot do it; you have purpoſed to lay out your ſelf more for the good of ſouls, to endeavour to help others in their way to heaven, but if you be as lukewarm as before, you cannot do more than you did before: But if your heart be enflamed with zeal for God, more than before, you will perform all your Religious undertakings with more life than before, you will pray with more life, and preach with more life, and ſpeak to men about the things of God and another Zeal.

ther world, than you did before; and this is the performance of your Purpose.

Frequent Self-reflexions.

15. *Be much in daily Reflexions whether you live up to your Resolutions, or no.* Review your life every night, reflect upon your Duties, and the manner of performance of them. Survey at night before you sleep the actions of the day, whether they have been according to the Rule of Gods Word; what temptations did assault you, and how you did resist them; what corruptions did rise in your heart, and how you did subdue them; what Ordinances of God you have sate under, and how you did improve them; what Talents God hath entrusted you with, and how you have employed them; what company you have been in, and how you did behave your self. If you do not call your self frequently to account, you will live below your Purposes, and not perceive it.

Renew your Purpose.

16. *Be often renewing your Purposes and Resolutions for an holy life.* Frequent acts do beget and strengthen habits: Actually renew your Purpose to pray to God, to walk circumspectly, to discourse of the things of God, and it will at length be habitual to you so to do. If you finde upon reflection and self-examination, that your Purposes are weakened, and your heart draws back from that pitch of holiness you did intend to labour after, binde your heart thereto by the renewal

renewal of your Purposes. If you finde you have broken your Resolutions, do not resolve to continue so to do, but repair them. If the Mariner be driven back by windes and storms, yet he keeps and renews his purpose of sailing unto his intended Harbour. If a Traveller fall in his Journey, he gets up and resolves to hold on his way.

17. *Presse your heart with the evils of coming short, and with the benefits of living up unto your Resolutions.* The evils of this, I shall speak to in the third general Head that follows next in order. The Benefits of keeping the purpose of your heart are many and great: Your sins will not be so many; your sins will not be so strong, for Resolutions against sin that are firmly made and carefully kept, do exceedingly weaken sin; and if you should sometime sin, your sin will not be so great, when God doth see you keep the firm purpose of your heart against it, though sometimes you are overborn and bowed down, yea and fall against the inclination of your will, and purpose of your heart. It will bring great benefits.

18. *Pray much to God for strength and power to perform your Purpose.* You resolved to pray more importunately unto God for mercy, but then you must pray to God, to enable you to pray as you have resolved. Resolution is our Pray for strength.

duty, but ſtrength to perform them is not in our ſelves, but muſt be fetched from God, and that muſt be by fervent, frequent Prayer. Pray that God would not leave thee to thy ſelf, that he would not forſake thee. Pſal. 119. 8. *I will keep thy ſtatutes*; there is *Davids* Purpoſe: *Oh forſake me not utterly*; there is *Davids* Prayer. As you muſt not purpoſe in your own ſtrength, but in the ſtrength of Chriſt; ſo you cannot perform in your own ſtrength, but in the ſtrength of Chriſt. If your reſolution be ſtrong againſt ſin, and you reſt in the ſtrength of your Reſolution, and think you ſhall not ſin, becauſe you have ſtrong Reſolutions againſt it, you will fail.

Mortifie ſelf-love and uſe ſelf-denial.

19. *Mortifie Carnal ſelf-love, and be very much in the exerciſe of ſelf denyal.* If you cannot deny your ſelf of what is pleaſing to the fleſh, you will deny a holy life. You muſt often deny your own wills, and your own deſires, and delights, your own judgements and reaſonings, your ſenſitive appetite, and your profits in the world, and hate all theſe in compariſon of better things, and when they ſtand in competition with God and Chriſt: If you love your pleaſures *inordinately*, and love your Liberty and your Life *inordinately*, your reſolutions for ſtrictneſs of holy walking with God, will not abide, nor be accompliſhed. The love of ſelf, as well as of ſin, is a great enemy to holy reſolutions.

20. *Often*

20. *Often urge your heart with the Examples of the holy men of God recorded in the Scriptures.* They purpoſed and were carefull to perform. *Jacob* vowed unto God, and payd it. *David* vowed unto God, and payd it. *Job* made a Covenant with his eyes, that he would not look upon Objects that ſhould irritate his ſinful nature, and ſaid, why then ſhould I do it? *Job* 31. 1. So do you ſay, When I thought my ſelf to be near the grave, I purpoſed to honour God more than I did before, if he ſhould ſpare me, why then ſhould I not do it? I purpoſed to watch againſt my ſin, why then ſhould I be careleſs? Examples.

Thus I have given you the Conſiderations to preſs you to be careful of your Purpoſes; and Helps to the performance of them, next I come to the Aggravations of neglecting to live according to your engagements in the time of ſickneſs and danger.

Sect. III.

III. THe Aggravations of the breach of your Vows and Reſolutions made againſt ſin, and for holineſs, when fears of death were upon you, do exceedingly heighten and increaſe your ſin; and becauſe ſick-bed Promiſes are ſo ſeldom made good, and ſick-bed Reſolutions uſually prove ſo ineffectual, I ſhall deſire you who have the Vows of God upon you, and who have reſolved (if God would continue to you Fourteen Aggravations of neglect to live up to our holy Reſolutions.

you live) as God and Conſcience, and it may be others, are witneſſes of, that you would weigh ſeriouſly as in the preſence of God, the evil of breaking your Vows, and being careleſs of your Reſolutions.

It is great hypocriſie.

1. This *is great hypocriſie*, to *purpoſe and not perform*: You ſeemed in your affliction to be affected with your condition, and to be afflicted for your tranſgreſſion, and to approve of an holy converſation, then you could weep for ſin, and now you work it; you could then lament it, and now commit it; then you ſeemed to be changed from what you really were before when you lived in ſome known ſin; but now it appears that you have really loſt that good which you did ſeem to have, and made profeſſion of in time of your ſickneſs. It is uſual with *Hypocrites to be beſt when they are ill, and to be worſt when they are well.* Hypocrites have their good moods, are good by fits; ſometimes pray, but not alwayes. *Job* 27. 8. *For what is the hope of the hypocrite,*— V. 10. *Will he delight himſelf in the Lord? will he alwayes call upon God?* i. e. He will not at all times, and in all conditions pray to God; when he is ſick, he may, but when his ſickneſs is removed, his Prayers are abated; *It is a ſign thy goodneſs was as a morning cloud, and as the early dew, it's gone away.* Hoſ. 6. 4.

Double Iniquity.

2. *This is double Iniquity*; it is twiſted wickedneſs: It is one ſin woven with another; it is

not

not onely double dealing, but it brings double guilt; if thou hadst not made thy vow and resolution to pray frequently, it had been but a *single* sin, if thou hadst been seldom in it, but now it is a *double* sin, and hath double guilt; that thou dost omit to pray, this is one sin; that thou dost omit it, after thou hast promised, and resolved and vowed to do it, this is the other sin; and indeed is this thy mending in thy sickness and dangers, to be doubling thine iniquity?

3. *This is great folly*, Eccles. 5. 4. *When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it, for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed*: It is folly to do that which is better be undone than done. *Vers.* 5. *Better it is that thou shouldest not vow, then vow and not pay. In thy affliction thou shouldest have learned wisdom and not committed folly.* Crea. fol.

4. *This is to lye to God, to men:* A vow is a promise made to God, *Deut.* 23. 23. *That which is gone out of thy lips, thou shalt keep and perform even a free will offering, according as thou hast vowed unto the Lord thy God, which thou hast promised with thy mouth.* What is first called a vow, is after called a promise, & if thou madest this promise with thy mouth and didst not really intend the fulfilling of it, but didst it, either to deceive thy self or others; or (had it been possible) God himself, what is this but a lye? If the words of thy mouth It is to lye to God.

were not conformable to the thoughts of thy minde, that thou ſpakeſt one thing in thy ſickneſs, and didſt intend another; thou ſpakeſt not as thou thoughteſt, thou art guilty of a lye * ethical. But foraſmuch as thy words do not agree to the things thou ſpakeſt of, thou art guilty of a falſhood logical, both are bad, though the firſt is worſt. And is not this an aggravation of thy wickedneſs to lye to God when thou art under his rod? Do not parents deal more ſeverely with their children, if they finde them lying, when they are under the rod? Are we not like to children, when they are ſcourged, will promiſe any thing to be ſpared, but preſently be found in the violation of their promiſe? But take heed how thou *lieſt* unto God. Remember the fearful inſtance of *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, *Act.* 5.3. *Peter ſaid, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lye to the Holy Ghoſt, and to keep back part of the price of the land.* Verſ. 4. *Whiles it remained was it not thine own? and after it was ſold, was it not in thine own power? Why haſt thou conceived this thing in thy heart? that thou haſt not lied unto men but unto God.* Verſ. 5. *And Ananias hearing theſe words fell down and gave up the ghoſt.*

* *Oratio, quando non eſt conformis menti dicentis, dicitur falſa ethice quando non eſt conformis rebus, eſt falſa logice.*

The like I might ſay of thy vow, before thou hadſt made it, it was in thy power, *Deut.* 23.22. *But if thou forbear to vow, it ſhall be no ſin in thee; but if thou haſt vowed, God will ſurely require it of thee*, and to *ſlack to pay would be ſin in thee.* *Verſ.* 21. Why then haſt thou conceived this thing in thy heart, to lie to the Holy Ghoſt, in making

making a vow and not paying, thou liest not to men, but unto God. Oh fear and tremble least death should seize thee presently, and thou fall down and give up the ghost. In thy vow thou liest unto God, if thou dost not pay, because we must vow onely to God; for sacred vows are a part of Religious worship, which must be given onely unto God, *Deut.* 23. 21. *Eccles.* 5. 4. But in thy promises thou hast made to men, thou hast lied unto men; and all this doth aggravate thy neglect of coming up to thy vows and promises in time of sickness and fears.

5. To *Neglect the keeping of thy resolutions and purposes against sin, and for an holy life, is it not a sinning against conscience, and against knowledge?* It seems thy conscience hath told thee, when thou resolvedst to pray more fervently, that lukewarmeness in prayer was a sin, and yet now thou dost not strive against it, thy conscience told thee that the ways of God were the best ways, and best for thee to walk therein, and yet now thou dost not do it, thy conscience hath been so far inlightned to dictate this unto thee, and yet thou goest against the dictates of thy conscience; thou dost not onely sin with knowledge, but against it, and sins against knowledge and conscience, are aggravated sins, and such a sinner is an inexcusable, and self-condemned sinner, *Rom.* 2. 1. didst thou not condemn thy self in time of *Plague*, that thou hadst taken no more pains for heaven, and for thy soul, that thou hadst prayed

To sin against conscience.

no more, and lived no better? And what need we any further witness, when thine own conscience will come in against thee?

It will make death terrible.

6. *This will make death terrible indeed unto thee, when it comes in good earnest to seize upon thee*, and then thou shalt finde that the same purposes, and resolutions will not quiet thee, when in *former* sickness thou hast had them, and in *after* recovery thou hast neglected to perform them. Thy last sickness will come, and death at last will come, and then thou wilt remember what vows thou hast made, and how thou didst not pay them unto God, how thou hast resolved against sin and a wicked life, but hast made no conscience of living answerable unto them, and this will make thee much afraid to dye.

It is great unthankfulness for your life.

7. *This will be great unthankfulness unto God for his preservation from, or restoration out of sickness*: To God belong the issues from death, but you deny it to him. When *Hezekiah* was restored from his sickness (its thought the plague) he was thankful unto God for his restoration, *Isa.* 38. 19. *The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day; the father to the children shall make known thy truth.* Vers. 20. *The Lord was ready to save mee; therefore we will sing my songs to the stringed instruments, all the days of our life, in the house of the Lord.* And is this to give thanks to God for preservation, for restoration from

from sickness? Hath God given you your life from the very borders of the grave? and is this the fruit you return to God, not onely not to be so good as you ought to be, but not so careful as you purposed to be? Or do you give thanks to God with your mouth that God hath kept you from the grave, and contradict it in your life? Your *orall thanksgiving* is nothing without *practical thankes doing*: Or do you praise God in words and dishonor him in your works, and do your lips acknowledge you are engaged to God for his protecting providence, and do you so live as if you had received no such mercy from him, and that your dependance were not *now* upon him? Is this your thanks to God to break your word with him?

---

8. *This will make you loose the spiritual benefit of your sickness and affliction, to be worse by the mercies of God, is to have mercies in judgement, to be better by judgement, is to have judgements in mercy*: But when you live no better, and are no better, nor endeavor to walk according to your resolutions in time of sickness, it is a sign your affliction hath not been sanctified to you, that (as to spirituals) you are not benefited by it; God hath put you into the furnace, but you are not purified, your dross remaineth; God hath corrected you but you are not amended; If affliction had worked for your good, if you had been bad, it would have made you good; if you had

It will make you loose the benefit of affliction.

had been good it would have made you better. *David* could say, *Before I was afflicted, I went astray, but now I have learned to keep thy commandment, Psal.* 119. 67. But you might say, in my affliction I purposed to walk close with God, but after I have been afflicted I go astray. *Surely your heart is very bad, when afflictions made you not better, and when mercies makes you worse.*

It is to approve of sin after dislike.

9. *What is this but to like of sin, and disapprove of strictness of holiness, after you have professed your dislike of sin, and approved of closest walking with God*: In your affliction you seemed to be sorry for your sin, but now the affliction is over, you seem to be sorry that you were sorry for your sin; in your affliction you seemed to repent that you had sinned, else why did you resolve against it? When your affliction is removed, you seem to repent of your resolutions against sin, else why do not you live and do as you did resolve? what is this but to smile upon sin after your deliverance, which you seemed to frown upon in time of danger of death and the grave? What is this but to finde sweetness in sin after you have tasted something of the bitterness of it? To re-imbrace that which you seemed to have cast from you? and this is an aggravation of the evil frame of your heart.

10. *What*

10. *What if thou hadst dyed in thy affliction, thou hadst gone to hell upon a mistake, and perished for ever, when yet thou hadst some hope* (though upon false grounds) *that thy condition was good, and that thou shouldest have obtained mercy:* When thou wast sick or in danger, thou thoughtest thy condition was good, because thou foundest thy heart to resolve to forsake thy sin, and purpose to close with the closest wayes of holiness, but if thou hadst then dyed, thou wouldest without doubt have been eternally damned, because thy resolutions were not penitential resolutions, as appears by the fruit of them, in thy returning to thy sin again, and that thou didst not indeed love God, and his holy ways, for if thou hadst thou wouldest not so soon, no, never after turned from them in the general course of thy conversation.

If thou hadst dyed in thy sickness thou hadst been damned.

11. *This will encourage the devil to more frequent tempting of thee:* For if by temptation he can prevail with thee to do that which is contrary to thy resolution; what hopes will he have to draw thee into sin, against which thou hast made no such particular resolution? If he overcome thee where thou art strongest, what spoil will he make upon thee where thou art weakest? It is a great advantage we give unto the devil, when we sin against our resolutions.

It encourageth the devil to tempt.

12. *This*

It provoketh God.

12. *This will be a great provocation unto God,* when thou doſt ſin, not only againſt his Precepts, but againſt thy own purpoſe; not only againſt the obligations he layeth upon thy ſoul by Mercy and Afflictions, but againſt the Obligations thou layſt upon thy ſelf by thy Purpoſes and Reſolutions: And in thy Affliction and fears didſt thou not apprehend God to be exceedingly provoked, but thou muſt after he hath preſerved, recovered thee, go on, to provoke him more.

Hinders Prayer.

13. *If this neglect be found in thee who haſt the truth of grace, yet it will much hinder thy confidence at the throne of grace, and ſtop the Influences of the Spirit of God, and obſtruct the illapſes of the Spirit from deſcending upon thy heart.* When thou keepeſt thy reſolutions, and keepeſt out of the wayes of ſin, thou canſt go to God with an humble, holy boldneſs, and pour out thy heart with much enlargedneſs before God, and there is ſweet intercourſe betwixt God and thee, thou feeleſt thy heart to burn in love to God, and thou perceiveſt God to bear a love to thee; and oh how ſweet is this unto thy ſoul! But when thou neglecteſt to watch againſt ſin, and to walk with God; when thou hadſt reſolved to do both, when thou goeſt to thy duty, thou wilt finde Conſcience reproach thee, and thy heart ſtraitned, and thy mouth ſtopped, and thy confidence abated, thy heart much eſtranged from God, and God carrying himſelf as a ſtranger

ger unto thee, when thou art upon thy knees: And this is the bitter fruit of a careleſs heart after heightned Reſolutions.

---

14. *If this neglect be found in thee that haſt the truth of grace, it will much occaſion the doubting of the ſincerity of thy heart.* A Childe of God may fail and be remiſs in proſecuting of his purpoſes ſometimes, but if he be, it will make him jealous of his own heart, and ſuſpicious that it is not well betwixt God and him; and is not that a ſore evil, and much to be oppoſed and lamented, which doth blot thine Evidences for heaven? and will make thee queſtion whether thou haſt one dram of grace in truth conferred upon thee, infuſed into thee? Begets doubtings.

Thus I have finiſhed this Direction alſo, ſhewing how you may live in ſome meaſure anſwerable to the great goodneſs of God in ſparing you in time of Plague, when ſo many thouſands fell round about you: By being carefull to be as good when the Sickneſs is over, as you purpoſed and reſolved to be when you were in expectation of death, and waiting for your change and diſſolution, when the Arrowes of God were flying amongſt you, in the time of this ſore Judgement of the Plague.

DIRECTI-

DIRECTION III.

Since you live, look after the cure of ſoul-ſickneſs.

HAth God ſpared you in time of ſo great *Contagion*, that you live when others are dead, or were you ſick and are recovered? then *Endeavour that the Cure may be a thorow Cure, that your Soul be healed as well as your body*, that there be not ſpiritual Judgements upon your Soul, when temporal Plagues are removed from your Body. You may obſerve, that ſuch that came to Chriſt with diſeaſed bodies, Chriſt healed their bodies and their ſouls too; he took away their corporal ſickneſs, blindneſs, diſtempers, and the guilt of their ſins too, *Mat.* 9. 1, 2. Many are delivered from a Corporal Plague, that yet are infected and in danger of eternal death by the Plague upon their hearts: That remain under ſpiritual Judgements, and *Soul-ſickneſs*, when temporal Judgements and corporal ſickneſſes are cured and removed. When St. *John* wrote to *Gaius*, he deſired that it might be as well with him as to his bodily health, as it was in reſpect of his ſoul, and ſpiritual health, 3 Ep. *John* v. 2. *Beloved, I wiſh above all things that thou mayſt proſper and be in health, even as thy ſoul proſpereth.* But it may be matter of our deſire concerning thoſe that remain alive, and are well after this Viſitation, that their ſouls may proſper

ſper and be in health even as their body proſpereth. It is a greater mercy to have an healed ſoul in a ſickly body, than to have ſpiritual ſickneſs remain in an healthful body: It is not ſo great a Judgement to have the body full of *Plague-ſores*, as to have the ſoul full of *reigning ſins*. If your body be cured and not your ſoul, the cure is but half done: Therefore in ſpeaking to this Direction. I ſhall ſhew theſe things:

1. *Wherein it appears that ſin is the ſickneſs of the ſoul?*
2. *Wherein it appears that ſin and ſpiritual Judgements upon the ſoul, are worſe than ſickneſs, and temporal Judgements upon the body?*
3. *How we may know whether our ſouls are healed of ſpiritual ſickneſſes?*
4. *What they muſt do that lye under ſoul-ſickneſs, that they may be healed?*
5. *What ſuch ſhould do, that are healed of their ſoul diſtempers, to improve the Cure to the glory of God?*

Sect. I.

I. *Wherein doth it appear that ſin is the ſouls diſeaſe, and the ſickneſs thereof? In theſe particulars.*

1. Sickneſſes and diſeaſes do *abate and take away the Appetite.* Sick men have not the Appetite to their food as men in health have. Sin is the ſouls ſickneſs.

So

So ſin takes away the ſpiritual appetite of the Soul, that it doth not hunger after Chriſt, nor thirſt after righteouſneſs, and hinders its feeding upon Chriſt, and the Word of God, which is the ſpiritual food for the ſouls nouriſhment and growth.

2. Sickneſs and diſeaſes do *abate the ſtrength and activity of the body.* So ſin doth weaken the ſoul, and all the faculties thereof, and doth diſable it in all its actings to, and for God.

3. Sickneſs and diſeaſes often *fill the body full of pain, aches, and ſores,* making men to cry out, Oh my head, and oh my heart, and oh my bowels, I am pained, I am pained: So ſin doth fill the ſoul full of racking fears, and perplexing torments and doubts, and ſometimes make ſome ſinners cry out, *I am undone, I am undone, I am damned, I am damned.*

4. Some diſeaſes *do ſtupifie and make men inſenſible,* and thoſe are the worſt. So ſin ſometimes makes ſome ſinners ſtupid and unſenſible of their miſery and danger.

5. Sickneſs and diſeaſes *do take away mens delight in thoſe things which men in perfect health do take pleaſure in.* Sick men have no delight in the pleaſures of the world, and in the riches of the world, which other men finde. So ſin takes away that delight in God and ſpiritual duties, and in heavenly things, which thoſe whoſe ſouls are cured do experience.

6. Sickneſs and diſeaſes *do ſpoyl the beauty of the body:* They ſpoil the faireſt complexion, and

make

make the ruddy cheeks to become pale; and many diseases bring deformity in the room of beauty. So sin doth spoyl the soul of that spiritual beauty wherewith it was adorned in its first Creation, which did consist in likeness unto God, so that now instead of the likeness of God, there is nothing but blackness and deformity; that the soul that was comely and amiable in the sight of God, is now become loathsome and abominable.

Sect. II.

II. *Wherein doth it appear, that Soul-sickness and spiritual Judgements upon mens hearts, are worse than sickness and temporal Judgments upon mens bodyes?*

THough most men in the World look upon bodily sickness and corporal Judgments to be more dreadful than sin upon their souls, yet if we take a right estimate, and make a true judgment of both: spiritual Judgements are the greater evils, Sickness of the Soul more dreadfull than of the Body.

In respect of the
1. Cause, or manner of conveyance.
2. Signs of greater wrath.
3. Subject, in which they do reside.
4. Number, being many.
5. Effect, that they do produce.
6. Difficulty of cure.
7. Want of sense.

1. Spiritual Judgements and soul-ſickneſſes are greater evils than temporal Judgements and ſickneſs upon the body in reſpect of the *cauſe*, or *manner of Conveyance*, which is by natural propagation, and ſo unavoidable. Sin is born with us, it is derived from Parents to Children, from one generation to another. There are ſome diſeaſes that are conveyed from Parents to Children, but this is not general, nor perpetual to all generations. But the propagation of ſpiritual diſeaſes is univerſal and general, it is conſtant and perpetual. The ſeed of all ſin is derived from *Adam* to all his Poſterity.

2. Soul-ſickneſſes and ſpiritual Judgements upon mens hearts are *Signs of greater wrath* than bodily ſickneſſes are. You may be ſick of the Plague, and yet God may love you; you may have bodily afflictions, and God may be at peace with you, and becauſe he loves you, he may afflict you. But ſpiritual Judgements, as judicial hardneſs, blindneſs, are ſigns of Gods anger, yea his ſoreſt diſpleaſure, yea (which is more) they are ſigns of Gods *Hatred* to ſuch a man that lyeth under them. Now that which doth alwayes argue Hatred in God to a ſinner, is worſe than thoſe things that might proceed barely from his Anger, and ſometimes from his Love: God loathes and abhorres that man, the plague of whoſe heart is not *at all* cured.

3. Spiritual Judgements and ſoul-ſickneſſes are

are greater evils than temporal and corporal ſickneſſes are, becauſe they be *ſpiritual*, and have the *heart* and *ſoul* for their ſeat and ſubject: As mercies are better that are ſpiritual, and that are *ſoul mercies*, ſo Judgments and ſickneſſes ſpiritual are the greater evils, becauſe they are the diſeaſe of the better and more noble part of man; that which doth corrupt the ſoul, muſt be worſe than that which doth corrupt the body, by how much the ſoul is more excellent than the body.

4. They are worſe, becauſe they are more *numerous*; there is more diſeaſes in the ſoul than in the body. If the body be diſeaſed in one part, it may be well in all the reſt; if in more, yet not in all; if in all, yet your caſe is not ſo bad: But there is no ſinner but is diſeaſed in every part; there are ſpiritual diſtempers in all the faculties and powers of the ſoul, in the Underſtanding, Will, Affections, Conſcience, Memory, Phantaſie: In the members of the body, no part free: Nay there are many ſpiritual diſeaſes in every faculty; in the Underſtanding, there are many; ignorance, errour, *&c.* in the Will many, ſtubbornneſs, chooſing the Creature and ſin, before God, *&c.* In every affection of the ſoul there are ſwarms of ſin: In the heart there are innumerable diſtempers, evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, theſts, blaſphemies, falſe witneſs, *Mat.* 15. 19. Spiritual diſeaſes naturally be all in every man, and be in every part of every man.

5. They are worſe in regard of the *Effects*. The effects of bodily ſickneſs, at the utmoſt, and the greateſt, is but the death of the body; it brings the body to the duſt, and the grave, it doth but ſeparate from friends, and betwixt the body and the ſoul. But the effects of ſpiritual ſoul-ſickneſſes (except they be healed) are dreadful, and inconceivably great; great and dreadful in this world, but greater and more dreadful in the world to come; they cauſe Gods anger, they deprive the ſinner of communion with God, they will ſeparate betwixt God and him for ever, they will bring the ſoul to the place of Devils, and the torments of the damned.

6. They are worſe in regard of *difficulty of Cure*. Bodily diſtempers may be cured by the skill of man, in the uſe of natural means, but the ſickneſs of the ſoul with nothing but the blood of Chriſt: Of which more afterwards.

7. They are worſe in regard of the *want of ſenſe*. Where one man cryes out of the hardneſs of his heart, and complains of the unbelief and earthlineſs of his heart, there are many cry out of the ſickneſs of their bodyes. If their finger doth but ake, they are ſenſible of it; but though the whole head is ſick, and the whole heart is faint, and exceedingly diſtempered, yet they are not ſenſible of it. Therefore, though God hath cured the Plague of thy body, and

not

not the Plague of thy heart; if thy bodily diſeaſe is removed, but the ſickneſs of thy ſoul remain without cure; thy caſe is deplorable: And while thou art rejoycing that thou haſt eſcaped the Plague, thou haſt more cauſe to goe unto thy Chamber, and be deeply humbled and mourn before God, for the Plagues and Judgements that remain upon thy Soul.

Sect. III.

III. *How may a man know whether he be healed of Soul-ſickneſs?*

THe cure of theſe diſtempers are but *partial*, yet ſo far are they healed, that they ſhall not be the death of the ſoul. The cure will not be perfect till we die. Death (we ſay) cures all diſtempers, and ſo it doth thoſe of the ſoul. There is a double wound that ſin doth make, there is the wound that doth certainly deſtroy the ſoul, by hindring it from ſalvation and eternal life, and there is the wound that deſtroyes the peace and comfort of the ſoul. So there is a double Cure, which Chriſt doth work, the one for the ſafety and happineſs of the Soul, the other for the peace and comfort of the Soul. The firſt of theſe we enquire after.

Signs of the cure of soul-sickness.

1. Every man that is healed of Soul-sickness, hath been *sensible* of it: Sin hath been thy sorrow and thy grief, and the burden of thy heart; thou hast groaned under it as the greatest load, as the greatest evil in the world. Every man that is bodily sick, and is sensible of it, and is unfeignedly willing to be freed from his sickness, and desireth nothing more, is not cured; but it is so in spirituals: He that is sensible of sin, and is heartily, and unfeignedly willing to part with his sin, as ever sick man was of sickness, is certainly healed by Jesus Christ: But such as never found so much sorrow for sin, nor sense thereof, as to make them willing to part with every sin, were never yet cured. How can a man that is wounded, have his sore dressed and lanced, in order to a Cure, and not be sensible of the smart and pain thereof? Or how can he be healed, while the sword that made the wound, abideth in it? It is as impossible *that* man should be healed of his spiritual sickness and wounds, that is not willing to part with sin, as for a man to be healed of his bodily wound, while he will not have the sword pulled out that did make it. Sin caused the wound and the sickness of thy soul, and if thou art not willing to part with every sin, thou art not healed: thy soul is sick, and if thou dost not feel it, that is the worse.

2. Where

2. Where the soul is healed the *sin is killed*; the life of sin is the death of the soul, and that which is the life of the soul is the death of sin; if Christ heal the soul, he wounds sin; he never heals both; if sin be wounded to death, the soul is healed unto life; as in the body, the more health is repaired, the more the disease is weakned; so the more the soul is cured, the more sin is mortified.

3. Where the soul is healed, there *grace is infused*; sickness being removed, health is restored. When Christ heals a sinners soul, he doth not onely *mortifie the sin, but sanctifie the sinner*; when a man is restored from sickness to health, that which made him sick is not onely removed, but that is introduced which maketh him well; so when Christ cures the soul, he doth not onely take down the power of sin, which did make him bad, but he infuseth that which doth make him good.

4. Where the soul is cured of the disease of sin, it is *sick of love to Jesus Christ*; it is not onely weary of sin, but exceedingly longeth after the presence of Christ, and communion with God, *Cant.* 5. 8. *I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye finde my beloved, that ye tell him, I am sick of love.*

5. Where the soul is cured of the disease of sin, it doth *receive Christ by faith*, when the

Iſraelites were ſtung with the fiery Serpents, and looked up to the brazen Serpent, they were certainly cured, *Num.*21. 8. Faith is an healing grace, becauſe it eyeth Chriſt the ſoul-Phyſician, and fetches vertue of healing from him, *Mat.*15. 28. *And Jeſus anſwered and ſaid unto her, O woman, great is thy faith, be it unto thee, even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.* Mat.9. 2. *And they brought unto him a man ſick of the Palſie lying on a bed, and Jeſus ſeeing their faith, ſaid unto the ſick of the Palſie, Son be of good cheer thy ſins be forgiven thee.* The blood of Chriſt is the healing plaiſter, and faith is the hand that takes it and applyeth it unto the ſore.

6. Where the ſoul is cured of the diſeaſe of ſin, it is *getting ſtrength for ſpiritual work*, and employment, more and more; it is growing ſtronger and ſtronger in grace and goodneſs, as a man whoſe diſtemper is broke, and going away, he is recovering ſtrength more and more to go about his calling and employment, he is ſtronger to walk and work; he can endure cold, and bear burdens more than before. A man that is ſpiritually cured is waxing in the fruits of the ſpirit, and growing in all the graces of the ſpirit of God, is more and more able to reſiſt temptations, to perform duties, to bear afflictions, and endure hardſhips for the ſake of Chriſt. By theſe ſigns you may diſcern whether your ſoul is cured, ſo far of the diſeaſes it lay under, that they ſhall not be its death and damnation.

SECT.

Sect. IV.

IV. *What ſhould ſuch do that are under ſoul-ſickneſſes, that they may be healed?*

1. YOU muſt be *ſenſible* that you are ſick; he that doth not feel himſelf ſick, will take no care about the means of health; it is thoſe that are ſenſible of ſickneſs that will value the skill of the Phyſician, and ſend to him, and deſire his direction, *Mat.* 9. 12. *But when Jeſus heard that, he ſaid unto them, they that be whole need not the Phyſician, but they that are ſick.* How to be cured of ſoul-ſickneſs.

2. When you are ſenſible of your ſoul-ſickneſs, you muſt *apply your ſelf to Chriſt*, the great Phyſician of ſouls. It is Chriſt that cometh to thoſe that feel themſelves diſeaſed, with healing under his wings, *Mal.* 4. 2. It is he that healeth the broken-hearted, *Luk.* 4. 18. Chriſt healeth us by his wounds, and cureth us by his ſtripes, *Iſa.* 53. 5. It is matter of admiration, and to many paſt belief, that applying of Medicines to a ſword, ſhould heal the wound made thereby; but this is above all reaſon, and beyond all diſpute that the bleeding wounds of Chriſt will be healing, to the bleeding wounds of the ſinner; *Chriſts Golgotha, is our Gilead*, and that you may be

be the more encouraged to come to Christ when you feel your self sick; consider

Christ the soul-physician.

(1.) Christ can heal *every disease*, and cure every wound; he hath a salve for every sore. There are some Physicians that can cure some diseases but not all, but Christ when he was upon earth, did heal all manner of diseases, *Mat.* 4. 23. whether thy eyes be blinde, or thy heart hard, or thy minde earthly, he can open thy eyes, and soften thy heart, and make thee spiritual; yea though thy sickness hath been Chronical, of long duration, yet he can heal thee: yea though thou art sick of a relapse (which is most dangerous) yet Christ can cure thee.

(2.) Christ will heal your souls *without putting you to any charge*; though you be poor and mean, and have nothing to bring to Christ, yet you may come for healing, he will give you his advise and counsel freely, he will give you your Physick (his own blood) freely, you have nothing and he expecteth nothing. The woman that had been diseased twelve years, and suffered many things of many Physicians and spent all, and grew worse, came to Christ and was presently and freely healed, *Mar.* 5. 25.

(3.) Christ will proceed in this cure *with all compassion and tenderness*; he will not deal more roughly with you than is needful, he exerciseth bowels of compassions while he is dressing his patient, or if he give you bitter potions,

or

or ſometimes uſeth corroſives, he will be exceeding tender over you all this while, *Mat.* 14. 14. *And Jeſus went forth and ſaw a great multitude, and was moved with compaſſion toward them, and he healed their ſick.*

(4.) Chriſt is a Phyſician that is *always preſent with his Patients*, to obſerve what operation his Medicines have upon their hearts; if you are ready to faint under the terror of a threatning, he is by you preſently to adminiſter a cordial from the promiſe to uphold your ſwooning ſouls. Other Phyſicians cannot be always preſent with all their Patients, but Chriſt is, *Pſal.* 34. 18. *He is nigh to them that are of a broken heart, and ſaveth ſuch as be of a contrite ſpirit*: If your heart be broken, he is nigh to binde it up.

(5.) Chriſt can heal your ſoul-diſeaſes *throughly and effectually*, and he onely can do it; others will but skin over your wound, but Chriſt will heal to the bottom, *Jer.* 6. 14. *They have healed alſo the hurt of the daughter of my people ſlightly, ſaying, peace, peace, when there is no peace.* Thus if you conſider what a Phyſician Chriſt is, you may be encouraged to come to him for healing.

---

3. If you ſay you are ſo ſick you cannot go to Chriſt, *Send for him by fervent prayer and he will come to you*: Cry to him, *O thou Phyſician of ſouls,*

I am ſick, ſo ſick that I cannot come unto thee, and except thou heal me I am a dead man, a damned ſoul. I beſeech thee uſe thy skill, for that will ſave my ſoul alive, put forth thy power for the curing of my diſeaſes, Oh ſtanch this bloody iſſue, elſe my ſoul will bleed to death; Chriſt never refuſed to come to any ſick ſoul that was importunate with him to come with healing under his wings.

---

4. If you would be healed, you muſt come to *Chriſts-Hoſpital, i. e.* unto Chriſts Ordinances, and this you may do; if you cannot come to Chriſt, yet you may come unto his Ordinances, you may come and hear, you may attend at the pools ſide, and at length he might come, and put you into the healing waters, *Mat.* 21. 14. *And the blinde and the lame came to him in the temple, and he healed them*, Pſal. 107. 20. *He ſent his word and healed them.*

---

5. If you would be healed of your ſoul-ſickneſs, you muſt *follow the directions and preſcriptions of Chriſt your ſpiritual Phyſician.* If you be ſick, and the Phyſician tell you what you muſt do, and preſcribe you means, and you ſet them in your window, or let them ſtand upon your table, and do not do as he preſcribes, you may dye of your diſeaſe; you muſt obſerve his adviſe, for the time, *when*, and for the quan-

quantity, *how much* you must take; or else your distemper will abide, yea and increase; Christ will tell you what you must do, and if you follow his directions, your soul shall recover and be saved.

---

6. If you would be healed of your soul-sickness; you *must not let slip the time of healing*; There is a time, a *nick* of time for healing, if you let that pass, you will dye of your disease. The Impotent people that lay at the Pool of *Bethesda*, were to observe the season when the Angel moved upon the water, and he that stepped in at the very nick of time was healed, *Joh.* 5.4. There is a time to heal, *Eccles.* 3. 3. I pray God, this healing-time might not be past and over to thee that readest these lines. Close then with the present motions of the spirit, if yet thou feel him working upon thy heart.

---

7. If you would be healed of your soul-sickness, you must *take heed of those things that will continue your disease*; If a man will eat those meats that feed his distemper, and is contrary to his health; he cannot rationally expect a cure. You must take heed of those sins, that if you do indulge, will not onely hinder your recovery, but will increase your misery.

8. If

8. If you would be healed of your soul-sickness, *do not undertake to be a Physician to your self*, nor go about to heal your souls, with any of your own Medicines; you may heal your own body, but not your soul, we are too apt to be Physicians to our selves, and to think to cure our soul-distempers by our duties, and by our own performances. But this will never be.

Sect. V.

V. *What must those do whom Christ hath cured of their soul-sickness, to improve this cure to the glory of God?*

Directions to give to God the glory of our souls cure.

1. *Ascribe the cure unto Christ*, and not unto any means or instruments: if you are cured of any bodily disease, you are not to ascribe it to your Physick, nor Physician, but to the goodness of your God; so if you are cured of your soul-diseases, you must not attribute this to praying, or to the Preacher, but to Jesus Christ, *Hos.* 11. 3. *I taught Ephraim also to go, taking them by their armes, but they knew not that I healed them.* Thus *David* blessed the Lord, who healed all his diseases, *Psal.* 103. 2, 3.

2. *Encrease your love to Christ*, who hath healed the distempers of your heart; will you not love that man that saved your life? and will you not

not love that Lord, that saved your souls? especially when you consider the manner and means of your cure. That he did it freely, and that with a Medicine of his own blood, other Physicians make you Medicines of other things, but Christ of his own heart blood; he died that you might live, and he was peirced, that you may be spared.

3. If you are healed, *take heed of falling into a relapse*, take heed of wounding your soul after healing; if you are healed go away and sin no more, least a worse thing come unto you, *Joh.* 8. 11.

4. If you are healed, *direct others to the same Physician*, you do so to your acquaintance, that are sick of the same disease that you have been, you tell them such a man is able and skilful, and he hath cured the same disease in you, and counsel and perswade them to go to him; do so in this case; you have a friend, a neighbor, a relation in a sinful state: Oh speak to them to go to Christ. Dost thou hear any soul complaining, alas my wound it is incurable, and my sorrow it is intollerable, my heart is sick, my soul is full of running sores; and I pray, but have no help, and I hear, but have no cure; now direct such a distressed sinner unto Christ, and from your own experience encourage him to hasten unto Christ, from whom you have found such healing virtue.

And

And if God hath healed thy body of the loathsome disease, in which thou mightest have said with *David*, *Psal.* 38.2. *Thine arrows stick fast in me* (probable *David* was sick of the Plague, which is called the Arrow of God, *Psal.* 91. 5.) *and thy hand presseth me sore.* 3. *There is no soundness in my flesh, because of thine anger*— 5. *My wounds stink and are corrupt*— 7. *My loyns are filled with a loathsome disease, and there is no soundness in my flesh.* 11. *My lovers and my friends stand aloof off from my sore, and my kinsmen stand afar off.* This (it may be) hath been thy condition who readest these lines; thy body was full of loathsome sores, and God hath cured thee, and which was worse, thy soul was full of loathsome reigning sins, and God hath healed thee; what now doth God expect at thy hand? but that since he hath given health unto thy body, and grace into thy soul, thou shouldest use both unto his glory; which if thou conscientiously and sincerely endeavor and practise, ere long thou shalt be received into the Armes of thy Lord, where there shall be no more sickness in thy body, nor sin in thy soul for ever.

The Reader is desired to make the following Direction the Fourth.

DIREC-

DIRECTION III.

HAth God spared you in time of Pestilence, then, if you would Live in some measure answerable to so great a Mercy, *Be eminently exemplary in the Place, Capacity, Calling, Station, or Relation wherein God hath set you.* Every Relation hath some Duties peculiar to that Relation; and every Calling and Capacity, wherein Divine Providence hath placed you, hath something wherein you may be peculiarly eminent: and, who knowes but God hath preserved you for this end, that you may excell in the Capacity and Condition God hath called you unto: if your Condition be a Condition of Prosperity, be eminent in Humility, Self-denial, and Charity; if of Adversity, be eminent in Submission and Patience, in undergoing the Will of God.

Be Eminent in your place and Relation.

But, that I may speak more Comprehensively and Distinctly, I shall consider, that every one that is left alive (after this sore Judgment) stands in one or more of these following Capacities or Conditions; in every one of which every Man (whom God hath spared) should now labour to be eminently exemplary: This Capcity is, either

- Political { *Magistrates*, or *Subjects*.
- Ecclesiastical. { *Pastors*, *Flock*.
- Oeconomical.
  - Conjugal { *Husband*, *Wife*.
  - Parental, or Filial. { *Parents*, *Children*.
  - Despotical, or Servile. { *Masters*, *Servants*.

One of these every Person is, that is preserved from the Grave: and, if every one would now endeavour in good earnest to do something *singular* (but singularly good) for God, in his particular Relation, to do the Duty which God peculiarly calls for, and excell therein, that you failed in, and came short of before; this would be a good Improvement of the Mercy, and this would be in some measure to walk up unto it.

SECTION I.

1. LEt us consider the Persons whom God hath in mercy spared from the Grave, in their Political capacity, and such are, either,

1. *Magistrates* and *Governours* set over us by God: Let me, with humility and reverence, minde you of your duty, and tell you, That God expecteth, and requireth, that since he hath intrusted you with Authority from himself, and given you Life, and preserved you from the Grave in

in the day of his ſore Viſitation in the City, that, though your Place and Office did oblige you to a leſs retired Life then many others, yet God hath kept you from Death by Infectious Diſeaſes: Now, ſhould you not inquire what you ſhould do for God? and, how you may improve your time and Talent for his Honour? ſhould not you puniſh Sin (that is ſo indeed) and Countenance Holineſs and Religion (that is ſo indeed?) ſhould not you be zealous for God, in puniſhing of open-Prophaneneſs? and the horrid Oathes, that have cried aloud in the eares of God, Men prophanely Swearing by the Sacred Name of God; and Sabbath-breaking, and violation of the Holy Day of God? did not *Nehemiah* do ſo? *Nehem.* 13. 15. *In thoſe dayes ſaw I in Judah ſome treading wine-preſſes on the Sabbath, and bringing in ſheaves, and lading Aſſes, as alſo wine, grapes and figs, and all manner of burdens, which they brought into Jeruſalem on the Sabbath day: and I teſtified againſt them in the day wherein they ſold Victuals.* Verſ. 16. *There dwelt Men of* Tire *alſo therein, which brought fiſh, and all manner of Ware, and ſold on the Sabbath* (as many did Fruit openly in ſome places of the Streets, and in Fields about *London*) *unto the children of Judah, and in Jeruſalem.* Verſ. 17. *Then I contended with the Nobles of Judah, and ſaid unto them, what evil thing is this that ye do, and profane the Sabbath day?* Ver. 18. *Did not your fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this City? yet ye bring more wrath upon Iſrael by profaning the Sabbath.* Verſ. 19. *And it came to paſs*

when the Gates of Jeruſalem began to be dark, before the Sabbath. I commanded the Gates ſhould be ſhut, and charged, that they ſhould not be opened till after the Sabbath: and ſome of my ſervants ſet I at the Gates, that there ſhould be no Burden brought in upon the Sabbath day. Verſ. 20. *So the Merchants and ſellers of all kind of Ware lodged without Jeruſalem once or twice.* Verſ. 21. *Then I teſtified againſt them, and ſaid unto them, Why lodge ye about the Wall? if ye do ſo again, I will lay hands on you; from that time forth came they no more on the Sabbath.* This Example is worthy your Imition; and, oh how much good may you do, and how much Sin, and Diſhonour to God thereby might you preven, if you do indeed obey the Laws of God, and Execute the good Laws of this Kingdom, in that Caſe made and provided? Should not you diſcourage Drunkeneſs, and Houſes notorious for uncleanneſs? That Taverns and Ale-Houſes be not ſo much frequented? ſhould you not be a Terror unto the Evil? why Drunkenneſs and prophane Swearings, and Brothel-houſes are Evils *indeed*, for which a Land is made to Mourn: and, ſhould not you be a praiſe to them that do well? *Rom.* 13. 3. *Are not you Gods Miniſters for good to them that are good; and revengers, to execute wrath upon him that doth evil?* and, can you walk worthy of ſo great preſervation from the Plague, if you do not cut down Sin, and incourage Godlineſs?

SECTION

SECTION II.

2. *Subjects*, and *People Governed:* Many and ſtrickt are the Precepts and Injunctions of God upon People to their Magiſtrates; and, no leſs then damnation is threatned, by God himſelf, to ſuch as oppoſe themſelves againſt their Magiſtrates, *Rom.* 13, 1. *Let every Soul be ſubject to the Higher Powers, for there is no Power but of God; the Powers that be are ordained of God.* Verſ. 2. *Whoſoever therefore reſiſteth the Power, reſiſteth the Ordinance of God; and, they that reſiſt ſhall receive to themſelves damnation.* Verſ. 5. *Wherefore ye muſt needs be ſubject, not only for Wrath, but alſo for Conſcience ſake.* True Religion we ſee (from this Scripture) doth oblige People and Subject, in Duty and Obedience, to their Magiſtrates; and none will more *Conſciencouſly* obey, than thoſe that are moſt Religious: Obedience to Magiſtrates (from this place) is required, becauſe (1.) They are Ordained of God. (2.) *They that reſiſt them, reſiſt an Ordinance of God.* (3.) Such as do ſo, *receive to themſelves damnation.* (4.) *They are* (appointed of God) *to be a terror to the evil, not to the good.* (5.) Conſcience is bound ſo to do. (6.) There is neceſſity we ſhould obey; We *muſt* obey, not only for Wrath, but Conſcience ſake: Some might obey for *favour*, and ſome for *fear*, but true Religion teacheth Men to be obedient to Magiſtrates from Principles of *Conſcience.* Strictneſs of Holineſs is reproached when it is aſſerted Subjects Duties to *Magiſtrates.*

to make Men disobedient: Once more, 1 *Pet.*2.13. *Submit your selves to every Ordinance of Man, for the Lords sake; whether it be to the King, as supreme.* Vers. 14. *Or unto Governours that are sent by Him, for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well.* Vers. 15. *For so is the will of God, you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish Men.* Vers. 17. *Honour all Men.* Religion doth not teach us to deny civil Respects to men: *Love the Brother-hood, fear God, honour the King.* Religion presses and obliges Subjects in duty to their Magistrate in these particulars.

1. Obedience to their Laws and Commandments, *Tit.*3.1. for their Laws and Commands are to be according to the Laws and Commands of God.

2. Honour to their Persons, *Rom.*13.7. for they are Gods Viceroys, therefore called Gods, *Psal.*82.6. *For I have said ye are Gods,* —— *but ye shall dye like men.*

3. Loyalty, whereby we are bound to the uttermost of our power, to maintain their Prerogatives, and preserve their Persons.

4. Prayer on their behalf; if God be angry with them we must intercede for them, if they want any Blessings, we must make supplication for them; if they lye under evil, we must deprecate those evils; if they find mercy from God, we must give thanks for them; all this is in 1 *Tim.*2.1,2.

5. Tribute, *Rom.*13.7. *For, for this cause pay you tribute also, for they are Gods Ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.*

6. Sub-

6. Subjection to their Penalties, *Rom.*13.4,5. This is to live in this capacity, to be peaceable, and rather take a thousand wrongs, than offer one; and to live in that obedience as becomes the Professours of the Gospel, that all may see that those that are obedient unto God, dare not be disobedient unto those to whom, and wherein, God commands them to yield obedience.

SECT. III.

II. Such as are spared from death by the Plague may be considered in their relation as *Pastors and People*; and the Protection of God over such, should engage them to discharge their mutual duties, as those that would testifie their thankfulness to God for continuing them in that Relation. God hath removed by the Plague some Ministers that the People shall *never* hear Preach more, and God hath taken some from every Congregation, of the People, to whom the surviving Ministers shall *never* offer Christ and Peace unto any more, who are *now* out of the reach of their reproofs, and exhortations: therefore such Ministers as *yet* have time to preach unto the People, should improve that little time that God hath given them in so doing; and the People that yet have time to hear their Ministers, should diligently do it, and improve their Ministry for the saving of their souls. But more particularly.

First, Ministers that have escaped the Plague should be eminently exemplary in a diligent performance of every work that God expecteth at their hands.

Ministers should be more in studying.

I. As in improving time, in giving themselves more unto *serious*, *closer studying*, that they may be more and more able for their Masters work, and more and more eminent in converting and building up the Elect of God; to be more *in their Studies, than in the Streets*; more at their Books, than at their pleasures; at this they should be early and late, according to Saint *Pauls* charge to *Timothy*, 1 Tim.4.13. *Till I come give attendance to reading.* Ver.14. *Meditate upon these things, give thy self wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all.* Such as are to work for God and the saving of souls should be *given* to Study and Meditation, that they may be more skilful and successful in their work; they should be as much in their Studies, as any Worldling in his Shop; Especially now such should study more (1.) the Word of God, which is to be the matter of their Preaching. Such are more apt to study the Writings of Men, more than the Word of God. (2.) Their own hearts, and the dealings of God with their own souls, that they may first experience the sweetness, and power, and efficacy of those truths they are to commend unto the People. (3.) The state of their Flock, and the condition of their People, *who* of them need to be reproved, *who* of them need to be comforted, and *who* of them be in doubts, and how they may by their Preaching be resolved.

They

They should study their People more, that they may preach on such subjects, not that are easiest unto themselves to speak unto, but that are most suitable to their people, and so most likely to be most profitable to them.

SECT. IV.

II. *Praying.*

Such should be more in improving time in *frequent, fervent Prayer.* They should pray, (1.) That God would direct their thoughts to the choice of that subject which might be most useful to, and is most necessary for their peoples souls. (2.) That God would assist them in their Meditations upon that subject, that they may speak from thence those things that may be most convincing, piercing, that they may meet with the Sins and Doubts of those they are to Preach unto. (3.) That God would give them success in their Labours. (4.) That God would give them a Door of Utterance, and assist them in the delivering of their Message (which they have from God) unto the People: St. *Paul* was much in Praying for the Churches, *Ephes.* 3. 14,15,16, 17,18,19. *Phil.* 1. 4. *Col.* 1. 3. 9,10,11. 1 *Thes.* 1, 2. 2 *Thes.* 1. 11,12. And in blessing God for the Truth, and growth of Grace in the hearts of the People; as matter of his joy, to see them holy, and eminent in holiness; to see them embrace the Gospel, and walk according to it, 1 *Cor.* 1. 4, 5, 7. *Phil.* 1. 3, 4, 5. *Col.* 1. 3, 4, 5.

1 *Thes.*

1 *Thes.* 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. And looked upon such as his Crown and Joy, 1 *Thes.* 2. 19, 20.

SECTION V.

III. *Preaching.* Such should improve the time (that God hath given them from the Grave) in *right Preaching of the Word*, and *Administration of the Sacraments* unto the People: God hath not spared them to Eate and Drink, and Sleep, and live at Ease; but to be painful in their Work. God hath laid (in this time) some of his Ministers in the Dust; and, they are silent in the Grave, whilest others have *opportunity* to speak for God, in Preaching to the People: and, God doth expressly charge them so to do, 2 *Tim.* 4. 1. *I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing, and his kingdom.* Vers. 2. *Preach the Word, be instant in season, and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and Doctrine*: and, there is a *woe* unto them, if they do not Preach the Gospel, 1 *Cor.* 9. 16. and are described to be such as are apt (as well as able) to Teach, 1 *Tim.* 3. 2. And if they do forbear to warn Men of their sins, those Men shall die, but God will require their blood at their hands, *Ezek.* 3. 18. And though God (in Judgment to a People) may make his Ministers dumb, and cause their Tongues to cleave to the roofe of their mouthes, that they should not be Reprovers to them, because of their sin, *Ezek.* 3. 26. Yet, such as

as are dumb, through Ignorance, that they cannot, or through Negligence, that they will not speak to Men to save their Soules, is a great charge of God against them, *Isa.* 56. 10. *His Watchmen are blind, they are all ignorant, they are all dumb Dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber.* Vers. 11. *Yea, they are greedy Dogs, which can never have enough: and they are Shepherds that cannot understand: they all look to their own way, every one for his gain from his quarter.* Vers. 12. *Come ye, say they, I will fetch Wine, and we will fill our selves with strong Drink; and to morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant.* And God sharply reproveth such for this neglect, *Ezek.* 34. 2. *Son of Man, Prophesy against the Shepherds of Israel, Prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God unto the Shepherds, Woe be to the Shepherds of Israel, that do feed themselves, should not the Shepherds feed the Flock?* Vers. 3. *Ye eate the Fat, and ye cloath you with the Wool; ye kill them that are fed, but ye feed not the Flock.* Vers. 4. *The Diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick; neither have ye bound up that which was broken; neither have ye brought again that which was driven away; neither have you sought that which was lost; but with force and cruelty have ye ruled them:* Vers. 18. *Seemeth it a small thing to you to have eaten up the good pasture, but you must tread down with your feet the residue of your pastures? and to have drunk of the deep waters, but ye must foule the residue with your feet?* Vers. 19. *And, as for my flock, they eat that which ye have troden with your feet, and they*

they drink that which ye have fouled with your feet.

Miniſters diligence in Preaching the Word (which, ſuch ſhould be awakened to, much more by Gods late Providence) is pointed at by God, in thoſe ſeveral Names, and Appellations; with which, they, and their Work, is Metaphorically ſet forth, as they are,

10 *Appellations, ſhewing the work of Miniſters.*

1. Labourers. *Mat.* 9. 38. Therefore muſt not loyter, but ſhould work as day-labourers.
2. Builders, 1 *Cor.* 3. 10. Muſt repair Gods Buildings.
3. Husbandmen, 1 *Cor.* 3. 9. Muſt Plow up the fallow ground, that they ſow not among thornes: they are Gods harveſt-Men, and that is hard work.
4. Watchmen, *Ezek.* 33. 7. Muſt ſee the danger, and indure the cold, and give warning.
5. Stewards, 1 *Cor.* 4. 1, 2. Muſt deal to every one their portion.
6. Fathers, 1 *Cor.* 4. 15. 1 *Theſ.* 2. 11. In begeting, and bringing up Spiritual Children for God.
7. Guides, *Rom.* 2. 19. Muſt direct loſt Men into their way.
8. Nurſes, 1 *Theſ.* 2. 7. Muſt feed the Babes in Chriſt.
9. Phyſitians, *Jer.* 13. 12, 13. Muſt heale the Spiritual Sickneſs of Mens Soules.
10. Embaſſadours, 2 *Cor.* 5. 20. Muſt Parley with Sinners, to make Peace betwixt God and them.

After

After such a Providence as this, those in this Office should labour to be more in the most *effectuall manner* of Preaching; as,

1. In Preaching with *more self-denial*; not seeking themselves, nor their own Applause, but more the Glory of God, and the good of Soules: 2 *Cor.* 12.14. *For, I seek not yours, but you.* 1 Tim.3.3. *Not greedy of filthy lucre.* 1 Thes.2.5. *For, neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloak of covetousness, God is witness.*

2. With more *plainness* to the capacity of the People; *Not with enticing words of Mans Wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit, and of power,* 1 Cor.2.4. Lest such seem to Preach themselves, and not Christ; and to speak one word to shew the excellency of Christ, and ten to shew the excellency of their own Parts.

3. With more *experience* of the things they Preach upon their own hearts.

4. More *particularly*, coming down to the particular cases of the Peoples Soules: *Dolus latet in universalibus.*

5. More *compassionately*; if possible, shewing the greatest desire after the Soules of them they Preach unto: When you stand in your Pulpit, remember, many of them you Preached to the other day are now in their graves, and are entred into Eternity; and, those that are before you must shortly follow after. you have not long to Preach unto them; those that are now alive before you must shortly die, and be damned or saved; be received to Glory, or thrust down to Misery:

Misery: such actual believing thoughts as these would move great compassion in Ministers hearts unto their People.

6. More *Livelily*; as those that believe the things themselves which they Preach unto others; remember you are Preaching to Men that must shortly die, and yet eternally Live: and, for ought you know, if you do not prevail with them by this Sermon, they may perish for ever: and, will you be luke-warm in such a case of so great importance?

7. What is *most necessary* to the salvation of their Soules: Press more the misery of Man by Nature; the necessity of seeing the evil; and be sensible of the burden of their Sin; the necessity of Christ; of Regeneration; of Holiness of heart and Life; of Justification by Faith in the blood of Christ; of Judgment to come; of the happiness of Heaven; of the torments of Hell.

SECTION VI.

IV. *Living exemplarily.*

Ministers, whom God hath spared from the Grave, in this time of great Mortality, should improve this Mercy in *the manner of their holy Conversation*; such Mens Lives should be the Application of their Doctrine, should press to Holiness, and live Holily; press the People to Mortification of Sin, and Self-denial, and be Examples to the People in this, else the People will not believe that they *think* what they say, if they do not in some measure *Live* as they say: Drunkards will not believe that that Minister is in

in good earneſt, in telling them, that Drunkards ſhall be damned, if he be one himſelf. Look therefore to your Life, and copy out that preſſed upon you, 1 *Tim.* 4. 12. *Let no Man deſpiſe thy youth. but be thou an example of believers, in Word, in Converſation, in Charity, in Spirit, in Faith, in Purity.* 1 Tim. 3. 2. *For a Biſhop muſt be blameleſs, the Husband of one Wife. ſober, vigilant, of good behaviour; a lover of Hoſpitality, apt to Teach.* Verſ. 3. *Not given to wine, not a ſtriker, not greedy of filthy lucre.*

SECTION VII.

THe People whom God hath kept alive ſhould improve their Life, in attending upon their Miniſters; in inquiring the Law of God at their Lips; in mingling the Word with Faith; in Conforming to the Truths of God, that are Taught by them; and being obedient to them, *as thoſe that watch for their ſouls*, Heb. 13. 17. But more Particularly. *The Peoples Duty in hearing the word.*

1. Come to Hear the Word of God with more Preparation then you were wont to do; *knowing it is the Word of God, and not the word of Men*, 1 Theſ. 2. 13. as that which doth concern your Immortal Souls, and your eternal ſtate in another World.

2. Come with a more teachable heart than you were wont to do, ſubmitting your Reaſon to the Word that is Taught you; reſolving to forſake every thing which ſhall be proved to you to be

a Sin, and to do every thing which shall be made appear to be your Duty: Hear, that you may obey, and Practise what you Hear: *Be not Hearers only, but Doers of the Word.*

3. Suffer not your Mndes to be filled with so many distractions, in time of Hearing, as they were wont to be; when you sit under the Preaching of the Word, let not your Hearts go after your Covetousness, *Ezek.* 33. 31.

4. Make particular Application of what doth most concern your Souls, more than you were wont to do: Hear for your selves.

5. Treasure up the Word (that you Hear) in your Hearts, and suffer not the Devil to steal the good Seed (of the Word) out of your Hearts, nor the Cares of the World to choak the Word of God.

6. Meditate more upon the Word of God after you have heard it; work it upon your heart: Preparation *before*, diligent Attention *in*, and Meditation *after* Hearing, will make you thrive more, and be more fruitful, by the Word Preached, than you were formerly, when you wholly omitted, or were more slight in all these.

SECTION VIII.

III. *Governors of families must set up Gods Worship in their houses.*

Such whom God hath spared alive (in this time of great Mortality) may be considered in an *Oeconomical capacity*, as Persons constituting of Families; and these may be considered as Governours, or those that are Governed: and

and ſurely all our Families are concerned to inquire what *Improvement* thoſe that are left in Families ſhould make of Gods *Signal* preſervation of them: Hath God ſwept away ſome Families wholly, not a perſon left, and ſpared yours? doth not this call for ſome return you ſhould make to God? Hath not God viſited your Family, and taken away ſome of your Children, or ſome Servant, or ſome Friend out of your houſe, and hath ſpared you; hath given life to ſo many whom he hath ſo eminently preſerved: When God hath ſent the Plague into your houſe, he gave it Commiſſion to fetch ſuch a one (in your houſe) to his or her eternal ſtate; but, gave it a Charge, it ſhould not ſeize upon you, or, if it did, it ſhould not kill you: and, doth not this call aloud to you, in all your Families, for ſpeedy thorough Reformation? Conſider the diſmal devaſtations made in ſome Families; the total ſubvertion of others: and yet, that God ſhould keep any Families in the midſt of his burning wrath; ſhould not this make every perſon inquire, What would the Lord have me to do? Now, the Governours ſhould bethink themſelves, What is our Duty? and, the Children whom God hath continued to their Parents, What would God have us to do? *&c.* There is not a Member in a Family but is greatly concerned to ſtudy what is the Duty which he ſhould excel in, according to the capacity and relation he ſtandeth in, in that Family: And that, after ſuch *Family-Viſitation* there may be *Family-Reformation*, I ſhall conſider,

(1.) The Duties of the Family in general, in reference to their joynt-Worſhipping of God.

(2.) Their Duties in particular, in the relation in which they are conſidered. For, when the Family in general, and every Member in particular Live up to the following Duties, they will live in ſome meaſure anſwerably to ſo great Preſervation.

Firſt, After your Families have been in ſuch danger, and yet ſo many of them, and ſo many in them are preſerved; *it muſt be your care to ſet up the Worſhip of God in your Families*; elſe you cannot [as a Family] walk anſwerably to ſo great Preſervation: What, hath God not turned you out of your Houſe by Death, and will you turn the Worſhip of God out of your Houſe? hath God ſpared you (think you) for this end, that there ſhould be eating and drinking in your Houſes, and not Praying and Reading in your Families? That there ſhould be Working, and Labouring early and late, and no calling upon God? Is this to make a Family-return to God? is this to give to him the Praiſe of his ſafe-keeping of you in time of danger and diſtreſs? And, this is chiefly incumbent upon you that are the *Governours* of Families, to call your Children and Servants together (every Morning and every Night) to Worſhip the God of your Salvation; the God that hath wrought ſo great Deliverance for you. I beſeech you in the *fear of God*, nay, in the Name of the *eternal* God I charge you, that you carefully, conſtantly keep up the Worſhip of God

God in your Families. And, that I may follow this, I ſhall ſhew you

Why, *Wherein*, and *How*, you muſt Worſhip God in your Families.

SECT. IX.

Why?

Firſt, The Reaſons why you ſhould ſet up the Worſhip of God in your Families, are ſuch as theſe;

1. From the *example* of the holy Men of God in Scripture, Joſh. 24. 15. *And, if it ſeeme evil unto you to ſerve the Lord, chooſe you this day whom you will ſerve; whether the Gods whom your Fathers ſerved, that were on the other ſide of the Flood, or the gods of the Amorites in whoſe land ye dwell; but, as for me and my houſe we will ſerve the Lord.* Some will ſerve the God of *this World*, that is the Devil, 2 *Cor.* 4.4. ſome will ſerve their Bellies, which they make *their* God, *Phil.* 3. 19. and ſome will ſerve their unrighteous Mammon, which they make their God; but, do you take up *Joſhua's* Reſolution, That you and your houſe will ſerve the Lord.

2. From the *Benefit* that will come to you and your houſe, if you carefully and conſtantly Worſhip God therein: God will take care of you and your family, if you take care of his Worſhip therein. Gen. 18. 17. *And the Lord ſaid, ſhall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?* Ver. 19.

For I know him, that he will command his children, and his houſhold after him, and they ſhall keep the way of the Lord, to do Juſtice and Judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath ſpoken of him.

3. From the *great evil* that hangs over your family, if you ſhould neglect the Worſhip of God therein; God will *curſe* your family, and his wrath ſhall be the portion of you and your Children, if the worſhip of God be excluded from your Houſe: though God hath ſpared you and your family in this *late Contagion*, yet his Wrath is ſtill *hovering* over your houſe, if you call not upon him, Jer. 10. 25. *Pour out thy fury upon the heathen that know thee not, and upon the Families that call not upon thy Name.*— Fury is the utmoſt of Gods wrath: and, this ſhall not be *dropped* only, but poured out upon your family; God will poure down ſhowres of wrath and fury upon thoſe houſes that neglect his Worſhip.

4. From *equity*; You would have all in your family diſcharge their duties which they owe to you; you would have your children be obedient to you, and your ſervants be dutiful to you, and do your work, and ſerve you; and, is it not then reaſonable that you and they ſhould diſcharge your duties unto God? and that you and they ſhould ſerve the Lord? when you and they have more dependance upon God, then they have upon you.

5. If you neglect your duty herein, you will be *guilty* of the blood of the Soules of thoſe that die in your family, and are damned for ever: you will

will be *bloody Butchers* to the soules of your Children and Servants: God hath committed the care of their soules (in great measure) unto you, and, can you discharge your trust that God hath reposed in you, in the total neglect of your duty herein? hath not God charged you in the fourth Commandment, that neither you your self should prophane his day, and that you should see that neither your sons nor daughters, neither your men-servants, nor maid-servants should prophane it; and, if they do, will not God require this at your hand?

6. The total neglect of Family-Worship will be a *flat denying God* to be the God of your family; that you take not God to be the *Master* of your family: would not you say, That your Servants deny you to be their Master, if they deny their Service to you? and, can you say, That God is the God of your house, if you, in your house do not Worship him? Mal. 1. 6. *A son honoureth his Father, and a servant his Master; if then I be a Father, where is mine honour? and, if I be a Master, where is my Fear?* — if your Family disown God, God will disown your Family; and if God disown and cast you off, will not your family be a miserable family?

7. If you neglect the worship of God in your Family, this will be a *bad example to those* that go out of your family to constitute other families; when your Children shall have families of their own, and your Servants shall have families of their own, will not they be too apt to neglect them, as they have seen you neglect yours? and so your

ſin will have an influence upon them, and you will be, in ſome reſpect, guilty of the neglect of Gods Worſhip in your Children and Servants families; but, if you be conſcientious in your family, you will be exemplary to them to do likewiſe.

8. God will puniſh your neglect of his Service to him with *Family-Judgments:* if you do not make your houſe a houſe of Prayer, God will make your houſe an houſe of Contention and Strife; an houſe of Railings and Quarrellings; and will puniſh you with undutiful Children, and diſobedient ſervants: for, how can you expect that they ſhould be good toward you, when you endeavour not to make them good towards God? if you would preſs your Children and Servants to love God, and obey and ſerve God, they would then obey you from a principle of Conſcience, and ſerve you, out of fear to God; they would be more faithful to you, if you would call upon them to ſerve God: Might not God juſtly ſuffer your Servants to purloin, and ſteal from you, when you and they do ſteal from God that time for the World, which is due to God?

SECTION X.

Wherein I. *In praying.*

Secondly, The Duties wherein you ſhould worſhip God in your Families, are ſuch as theſe;

In *Praying* unto God, and that (1.) ordinarily: And, your ordinary Praying unto God in your family ſhould be *daily*, and, that at leaſt *twice every*

every day; every Morning when you riſe, and every Night, before you diſmiſs your Family to their reſt and ſleep. Exod. 29. 38. *Now, this is that which thou ſhalt offer upon the Altar; Two Lambs of the firſt year, day by day continually.* Verſ. 39. *The one Lamb thou ſhalt offer in the morning, and the other Lamb thou ſhalt offer at even:* Though the Ceremonial part of this be aboliſhed, yet the Moral abideth, and is perpetual: and, the reaſons for daily Prayer in your families are perpetual; as,

Four Reaſons for daily prayer in families.

(1.) You have *daily family ſins*, and therefore in your family you ſhould daily confeſs them, and beg the Pardon of them; that you and your family might not go about your neceſſary occaſions all the day, nor to your neceſſary reſt at night, with the guilt of ſin upon your Soules. (2.) You have every day *daily wants*, therefore you ſhould daily beg ſupplies for your family: and, Chriſt bids you pray, *Give us this day our daily bread.* (3.) You have *family buſineſs every day*, and you ſhould pray to God daily for his bleſſing upon your endeavours, for the good of your family. (4.) You have every day *family mercies*, and ſhould daily bleſs God for them: when you wake in the morning and find your houſe not fired in the night, is not this a family mercy? and, ſhould not your family be called together to bleſs God for this mercy? in the morning you find your family all in health, none of them dead in their beds: and, ſhould not you, ſince you all live, all come together, and bleſs God, that ſleep was not turned into death, nor the darkneſs of

the night into the darkneſs of Hell to any of you? And, have you not many mercies every day, you went out well about your imployment, and you returned well, and God hath bleſt your endeavours with ſucceſs; and, ſhould not you give to God the praiſe of his Mercy before you ſleep? or, if you have ſuſtained ſome Loſſes, ſhould not you pray to God to ſanctifie them to you, and inable you patiently to bear them, and ſubmit to the will of God therein?

(2.) Or, family-Prayer is ſometimes extraordinary, when your family lies under ſome extraordinary affliction, or wants ſome extraordinary mercy, or have had ſome extraordinary deliverance from evil and danger, then ſhould you in your family ſend up extraordinary Prayer and Praiſes unto God: ſo did *Eſther* and her Maidens faſt and pray, *Eſther* 4. 16. And I could wiſh that families apart were more acquainted with, and more frequent in this duty.

II. *Reading the word of God.*

In *Reading the Word of God*: This would be better then *Cards* and *Dice*. But, in many Families the Bible lies upon the *ſhelfe* all the week long, and ſcarce have it in their hands but when they take it to go to Church, and many ſcarce then neither.

God hath commanded you to acquaint your family with the word of God, and, how will you do it, if you never Read it to them, nor Diſcourſe of it with them? Deut. 11. 18. *Therefore ſhall you lay up theſe my words in your heart, and in your ſoul, and*

and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes. Ver. 19. *And ye shall teach them your Children, speaking of them, when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way; when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.* View this Scripture well, (ye Masters of Families) and be ashamed of your neglect of reading the Scripture in your houses; you should talk of it at home and abroad, morning and night when your Familie should be with you. You should read the Scripture to your Family for these Reasons:

4 Reasons for reading Scripture in Families.

1. Because the Word of God is the *spiritual food* of the souls in your Family. It is the bread of Life. It is milk for the nourishing of their souls, 1 *Pet.*2.2. It is to be preferred above their necessary food, *Job* 23.12. Now will you give them bread for their bodies, and deny them bread for their souls? Their souls can no more live without spiritual food, than their bodies can without corporal. Take heed you deny not bread to your children and servants souls.

2. Because the Word of God is the *spiritual Armour* for the preserving your Family from being robbed by your spiritual Enemies, the Devil, Sin, and the World; You will have some weapon in your house to defend your self from thieves. Why, the Devil will play the thief in your house, and will steal away the souls of your Children, and will steal away the souls of your Servants, and will you not put so much as a Weapon into their hands to defend themselves? Your Children and Servants will be stollen away by the *Spirits,*

Spirits, if you arm them not with the Word of God, which is the Sword of the Spirit, *Eph.*6.17.

3. Because the more you read the Word of God to them, the *better they will be to you*, and the better perform the duties of their Relation: You complain of disobedient Children, why do not you read the Scripture to them more, to teach them that God requires them to be obedient to you? You complain of bad Servants, why do not you then read the Word of God to them more, that they may know their duty better by reading the Scripture to them? Make them but good Christians, and then they dare not, but be good Children, and good Servants.

4. Because the Word of God is able *to make them wise unto Salvation*; You would have your Children wise to live in the World; you would have them wise to get Riches, and a great Estate; You would have your Servants wise to do your work, and to go about your business: And would you not have them wise for their souls? Would you not have them wise for heaven and the Life to come? If you would, then acquaint them with the Word of God, 2 *Tim.*3.15. *And that from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.* And he is wise indeed, that is *wise* enough *to save his soul.*

III. Repeating things delivered in publick.

In *repeating what you hear in the publick Congregation*, in discoursing to your Family what sin

was

was reproved, and what duty was inforced, and what were the Arguments and Motives thereunto. What Christ preached more publickly, he repeated to his Disciples (which were as his Family) more privately, *Mar.* 4. 10. and 7. 17. *Mat.* 13. 36, 37. and the Apostle commanded Wives to ask their Husbands when they came *home*, the things that were delivered in the Congregation, 1 *Cor.* 14. 34, 35. This would keep your Children and Servants better imployed on the Lords day, than to be standing Idle at your doors, or walking sinfully in the fields. This would make them profit more by the Word preached, if you would repeat it to them, and use them to give account of what they hear.

IV. In Catechizing.

In *Catechizing* of your Family, and teaching them the Principles and Fundamentals of Religion; Mans *Innocency* by Creation, Mans *misery* by the Fall, Mans *Recovery* by Christ, and the terms of the Covenant of Grace; the meaning of the ten Commandments, what sin in them is forbidden, what duties are required; this is Gods plain Injunction that you should do so, *Deut.* 6. 6, 7, 8, 9. and the meaning of the Sacraments, *Exod.* 12. 25, 26, 27. (1.) To *Teach them while they are young is a good means to make them good when they are old*, Prov. 22. 6. *Train up a child in the way he should go when he is young, and he will not depart from it when he is old:* but if you let them alone till they be accustomed to do evil, it will be hard to reclaim them, *Jer.* 13. 23. *Qui semel*

4 Reasons for Catechizing in Families.

semel est Imbuta recens, &c. (2.) This will be an effectual means *to keep them from being seduced*, and led away with Errours and false Doctrine. (3.) It *will be great cruelty* to the souls of your Children and Servants to neglect it. Will you carry your self towards your little ones, as the Ostrich doth towards her young ones, *Job* 39.14. *Which* (speaking of the Ostrich) *leaveth her eggs in the earth, and warmeth them in the dust.* Ver.15. *And forgetteth that the foot may crush them, or that the wild beast may break them.* Ver.16. *She is hardened against her young ones, as though they were not hers.*— (4.) It would be *to break your Vow* which you made when you brought your Children unto Baptism; Did you not promise they should forsake the Pomps and Vanities of this World, and that you would bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and will you dedicate them to God in Baptism, and leave them to the devil all their life after?

Consider I beseech you, it may be God in mercy and pity to your Childrens and Servants souls hath spared you in this *Late-great Mortality*; and consider whether your conscience doth not accuse you of great neglect towards some of your Children and Servants which are now lying in their Graves; it may be there hath dyed a poor servant out of your house, which you never spake to in good earnest about the matters of his soul; or doth not your heart wish that he were with you again, that you may instruct and teach him, and will you do so to those that do remain? it may be some of them that have died out of your house

are

are gone to hell through your neglect, and will you have no more pity upon thoſe that yet are with you? The other, now are out of the reach of your Counſells and Inſtructions, but theſe are not, what was wanting in you towards thoſe that are dead and gone, make up to thoſe that live and do remain.

In ſinging forth Gods praiſes, in Pſalms, and ſpiritual Songs; this is an Ordinance of God, *Eph.*6.19. *Jam.*5.13. You muſt ſing with grace, *Col.*3.16. Exerciſe your grace of joy in God, in commemoration of Gods benefits, of holy deſires, of Godly ſorrow, as the occaſion and the matter of the Pſalm require; this is the ſweeteſt Harmony in the ears of God. You muſt ſing with underſtanding, with ſenſe and feeling, and to the Lord, to his glory, as in his preſence; this would be more ſutable for your Family, than Ballads, prophane and laſcivious filthy Rymes, which you ſhould not ſuffer under your Roof. V. In ſinging Pſalms.

SECT. XI.

Thirdly, The manner how you ſhould Worſhip God in your Family is chiefly to be minded, for it is not any ſervice that God will accept, you may keep up a courſe of praying in your Family, and yet live very unworthy of the great mercy of God in your wonderful preſervation. Therefore, *How.* 1

1. In

Really. 1. In your Family worship God *really and indeed*, with your heart, and mind, and all your strength; do not seem to pray, but pray indeed, in your Family. For this end consider, (1.) The God whom you serve in your Families is *God indeed*; he is *a real God*, therefore worship him indeed, and in a real manner. (2.) The sins of your Families are *real sins*, your own sins are real sins, and your childrens sins are real sins, and have real guilt, therefore confess them really, and mourn and sorrow for them really. (3.) The wants of your Family are *real wants*; you do not seem to want outward mercies, but except God supply you, you will want them indeed. (4.) The supplies which God doth give you are *real supplies*: God giveth you real health, and real food, and real cloathing for your Family, therefore be real in your Family Worship. (5.) You and your Family are *real in following of the World*, you work in good earnest, and you buy and sell in good earnest: And will you be real in the things of the World that concern your Family, and will you not be real in your Family Worship?

For five Reasons.

Livelily. 2. In your Family worship God *Livelily*; not only with a true and sincere heart, but with a lively heart, take heed of dulness and formality; take heed of *sleeping* at your prayers. And here I would advise that Masters of Families would not put off their duties too long in the Morning, till half the day be past, nor too late in the Evening, when the Family will be more disposed

sed and inclined to sleep than to pray.

3. In your Family worship God *chearfully*, go not to Family Prayer as a task and burden, but as a great favour and priviledge that you and your Children might call upon God. Chearfully.

4. In your Family worship God *constantly*: Some will pray on a Sabbath night, but it may be not all the Week after. Thus if you serve God in your Family it will be a great step to your walking in some measure answerably for so great preservation, and then it will be a good discovery that God hath spared you in mercy, to do him service in the Education of your Children, and not in judgment, to the encreasing of your sins only. Constantly.

Thus far concerning the Duties of Families whom God hath spared in this time of Pestilence in general. Of the several Relations in a Family next.

SECT. XII.

Secondly, If you will live in some measure answerably to so great a mercy, as Preservation from death in a time of great Mortalitie, is, then fill up the duties of your particular Relation wherein you stand. Relative sins are very offensive unto God, and a great scandal to Religion.

The

The first of these Relations in a Family is,

Duties of husbands & wives, whom God hath spared in this Plague.

First, *Conjugal*, betwixt Husband and Wife; and the great duty incumbent upon them is mutual love, in which many are *deficient*, and many are *excessive*, it being hard for such to let out their affections one to another so much as God *commands*, and no more than God *allows*; and both these extreams will terrifie conscience when such come to dye. And this sin is more usually seen when death hath broken this Relation, than while God continueth them together; the Surviver then seeth he did not love his Wife, and the Wife, her Husband, with that degree of love as that Relation called for, or with a greater degree than was pleasing unto God, when the love of this Relation did diminish the love they should have to God: And how many breaches hath God made in this Relation to punish the sin of both extreams? It may be thy love was Immoderate, and therefore God hath taken thy Relation from thee: Or it may be thy love was deficient, and therefore God hath taken thy Relation from thee. When thou wast sick, and thou thoughtest thou shouldest have died, did not thy Conscience then accuse thee for one of these in thy Relation? And yet hath God spared thee and thy Wife, or thee and thy Husband, then what conscience did reproach thee for in this particular, if thou wouldst answer Gods mercie in sparing of thee, let this be reformed. There are many this day may be lamenting not so much the loss of this Relation, as that they did not walk suitablie in this Relation while they were in

it,

it, this being the sting of their affliction. Oh! methinks such as God hath continued in a Conjugal Relation in this time of *great Mortality*, should look upon themselves now more engaged to perform their mutual duties with more care and conscience than before. Such a one hath buried his Wife, and such a one hath buried her Husband, but God hath preserved you in your Relation, you cannot live answerablie for this mercie but in a better discharge of your mutual duties. How would you wish you had loved your Relation, Wife or Husband, if God had taken either away by death, so do now when God continueth you both in life.

Because this conduceth so much to an answerable return for so great a mercie I will a little insist upon it. And in the general, if you would improve this mercie, the direction is, that your love and affection be such one to another, as is the love *betwixt Christ and the Church.* Eph.2.25. *Husbands, love your Wives, even as Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it.* And this love of the Husband must be requited with the love of the Wife, for it is reciprocal, *Tit.*2.4. *Teach the young women to be sober, to love their Husbands.*——

SECT. XIII.

BUT more particularly I shall speak to three things:

O What

What manner of love is this
Why they should have this
Wherein they should manifest this
} love one to another.

I. If you will improve this mercie God hath vouchsafed you, your love must have these properties.

The properties of their love Superlative.

1. It must be a *Superlative* love, that is in respect of all sublunarie things; though your love to God and Christ must be more than your love one to another, else it doth *sinfully exceed*, for if any loveth Father or Mother, Husband or Wife, more than Christ, he is not worthie of him, yet in respect of all other persons and things in this world, it must be more, else it is *sinfully deficient*; A man must love his Wife above all other persons, above his Estate, or whatsoever is dear unto him in this world, and so the Wife. Thus Christ loveth his Church, and a believing soul, above all other persons, and the Church reciprocallie loves Christ above all other things in the world.

Constant

2. It must be a *Constant love*, it must last as long as life in both doth last. The longer you live in this Relation, the more you should love. Length of time must not wear off the commanded and allowed strength of your mutual Affection. Thus Christ alwaies loves his Church, and the Church alwaies loves Jesus Christ.

Holy;

3. It must be *Holy love*; from an *holy Principle*, obedience to God's command; in *an holy manner*, according to the Word of God; for *holy ends*, the glorie of God, *&c.* Carnal love, for carnal ends, is not the love that God requireth in this Relation.

on. Thus Christ loves the Church, and the Church loves Christ with an holy love.

4. It must be a *tender*, *compassionate*, and *sympathizing love*; if God lay his afflicting hand upon either, in sickness of bodie, in terrours of mind, the other is to be tender, and to sympathize in those afflictions. If God lay his hand upon both, in Povertie and want, they should not fret one against the other, (which is too usuall) but should both with tenderness of compassion endeavour to bear the same burden, and make up that which is wanting in outward enjoyments in the degree of their love. And this would lighten many burdens, and sweeten the bitter Cup of affliction which God may put into both their hands; as the want of Conjugal affection in many doth make that heavie which is light, and that bitter which is sweet. Thus Christ loveth his Church, and sympathizeth with her in all her afflictions, *Isa.*63.9. *Acts* 9.4. Tender,

5. It must be *Forgiving love*; that shall hide and cover the infirmities of each from the world, every miscarriage in this Relation should not abate the affection of one to the other. Sinful Infirmities must not be allowed of in one another, because they must be faithful to each others souls, and yet they should not be blazed unto others, because of the love to each others person. Thus Christ loveth his Church notwithstanding her sinful Infirmities; and because he loveth her, he is readie and willing to forgive her. But there is no such retaliation of this Propertie of love in the Church to Christ, because he hath no such Forgiving love

ſinfull infirmities: but there is no ſuch husband in the world beſides Chriſt, and therefore in our caſe it is reciprocal.

SECT. XIV.

II. The Reaſons of their love

THe Reaſons why there ſhould be ſuch love and mutual Affection betwixt thoſe in a Conjugal Relation are ſuch as theſe:

1. Becauſe God *commands it*; and with gracious perſons a command of God is inſtead of a thouſand Reaſons. Before this Relation be entred into, perſons may lawfullie look after attractives and motives of love, but when once they are ſo related, this is ſufficient reaſon (though there are others) why they ſhould love, *Eph.* 5. 25. *Tit.*2.4.

2. Becauſe they *are one fleſh*; He that loveth his Wife loveth himſelf, and ſhe that loves her Husband loveth her ſelf, *Eph*,5.28,29. It is unnatural in any to hate their own fleſh.

3. Becauſe the *comfort of their life*, and the ſweetneſs of this Relation much depends upon their mutual affection.

4. Becauſe the *Goſpel will be much hindered* by the want of this love in thoſe that make profeſſion of it: The Goſpel much ſuffers when wicked perſons obſerve that Profeſſors fill not up their relative duties, *Tit.*2.4. *Teach the young women to be ſober, to love their Husbands, to love their Children.* Ver.5. *To be diſcreet, chaſte, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own Husbands,*

that

that the Word of God be not blasphemed.

5. Because else they *will be more unfit for spiritual duties*, either together, or apart. When there are differences betwixt Husband and Wife, it is an hinderance to them in their praying one with another, in their praying one for another; want of this Conjugal affection, and breaches in this relation, hath often straitened the heart of the party offending at the throne of grace, and this professing Husbands and Wives should be careful of, 1 *Pet.*3.5,6,7. The Apostle had exhorted persons in a Conjugal relation to discharge their mutual duties, after the Example of *Abraham* and *Sarah*, and the reason he alledgeth is, *That your Prayers be not hindred.*

6. Because *else they cannot comfortably dye.* Breaches in the duties of this Relation, will make great breaches in our peace of conscience when we come to dye. When you are to part at death, conscience will be lashing of you: God hath set thee (saith Conscience) in such a relation, but thou hast not had the love of that Relation. God gave thee such a yoak-fellow, but thou didst not live with that affection as he did require, and now thy relation must be broken. Oh then, saith the offendor, if God would continue me a little longer in this relation, how would I walk more sutably in performing the duties thereof better than hitherto I have done; but do it now before death doth part you.

SECT. XV.

III. Wherein they ſhould manifeſt this love.

THe duties wherein thoſe in a Conjugal Relation ſhould manifeſt this mutual affection, and they are ſuch as are, either { Proper to each. / Common to both.

The Husband manifeſts his love in { Direction in caſes dubious. / Protection in caſes dangerous, 1 *Sam.*30.18. / Proviſion of things needful, 1 *Tim.*5.8.

The Wife manifeſts her love in { Inward Reverence, *Eph.*5.33. / Outward ſubjection, 1 *Pet.*3.1.

The duties that are common to both do either concern. { The body, or things temporal. / The ſoul, or things Spiritual.

1. In the affairs of this life they ſhould manifeſt their mutual love one to another,

In { Procreation / Education } of Children. / Adminiſtration of houſhold affairs / Times of affliction and ſickneſs.

2. In the concernments of each others ſouls, or things ſpiritual, their love ſhould be *eſpecially* manifeſted; Love to the ſoul is the Nobleſt love, becauſe the ſoul is the nobler part; to love the body and hate the ſoul, (as too many do) is but *cruel* love. Their love is higheſt love, that love each others ſouls, and this love is manifeſted,

1. In *Reproving* one another for ſin; this is

is greatest love; not to reprove is to hate, *Lev.* 19.17. So *Job* his Wife, *Job* 1.9,10. So *Abigail* her Husband, 1 *Sam.*25.36,37. where you may observe both *Abigails* Piety, she reproved *Nabal:* And her Prudence, when the wine was out of his head.

2. In *comforting* one another under inward terrours; So *Manoahs* Wife comforted him, *Jud.*13.22,23.

3. In *Provoking* one another to good works of Piety, and Charity. This is the only allowed contention betwixt Husband and Wife, who shall be *best*, and love God *most*, and do most good: but not to provoke to wrath and wicked works, as *Jezabel* did *Ahab*, 1 Kings 21.7,8,9. Wicked Husbands are usually very wicked, when wicked Wives stir them up to do wickedly, *ver.*25.

4. In *Praying* one with another, and praying one for another. It is great love in such to improve their interest at the throne of grace one for another.

Thus if you whom God hath spared, and continued life unto, after this Contagion, would resolve to live together, you would so far as concerns you in this respect, live in some measure *answerably* to so great a mercy, else you cannot. Hath God spared you to be more *unkind* one to another? To be *bitter* one against another? To *grieve* one another? Or do you think this is the *Improvement* you should make of this mercy? God forbid.

SECT. XVI.

Secondly, The next Relation I consider in a Family, is between *Parents and Children*, whom God hath continued after this *great Mortality*. God hath taken away Parents from *others*, and they are left *Orphans*, but God hath continued thy Parents, *Both*, or *one* to thee. What doth God require from thee in answer to a suitable return for this mercy? God hath taken away Children from others, and bereaved them of those that were dear to them, but God hath continued thine, *all*, or *some* to thee, what doth God require at thy hands in answer to a suitable return for so great a mercy? It is that Parents and Children should fill up the duties of this relation, else you can never walk worthy of this mercy. But more particularly,

Duties of Parents whom God hath continued to children, *viz.* Instruction.

First, Parents, if they would live answerable to this mercy of Children continued to them, must be careful,

First, In *instructing* of them in the things of God: and training them up in the waies of God, this is the duty of both Parents, *Pro.*1.8. *My son hear the instruction of thy Father, and forsake not the Law of thy mother*, Prov.31.1: *The words of King Lemuel, the Prophesie that his mother taught him.* This mothers might do when they are dressing of their Children. Do not think you do enough if you make provision for your children, and get a *portion* for them: Let me tell you, that is the least part of your duty, as hard as you think

think it is; but, you muſt give them inſtructions, and that

1. *Timelily*, before they are accuſtomed to evil; they are born in *natural* hardneſs, and, by frequent acts of wickedneſs they will contract *habitual* hardneſs; and then, if God clap upon their hearts *judicial* hardneſs, your Children are undone for ever: Children before they can goe, can run from God; and, before they can ſpeak plainly, can ſpeak wickedly: Teach them not to be proud of their fine Clothes; teach them not Revenge, by giving you a ſtroak to beat others; theſe be the buddings of Pride and Revenge in little Infants.

2. Inſtruct them *frequently*; They are apt to learn evil, but backward to learn any thing that is good: There muſt be Line upon Line, *Deut. 6. 6,7.* You muſt whet the things you ſpeak unto them, that they may pierce their hearts; frequently inculcate the ſame things upon them, and inſtil the knowledg of God into them by little and little.

3. Inſtruct them *affectionately*; Let them perceive (when more grown up) that they are matters of *Weight* and *Moment*, that you ſpeak to them about: When you ſpeak of Heaven and Hell, of God and Sin, let them ſee that your hearts are affected with what you ſay.

Secondly, In *Correcting* of them for the evil of Sin: He that ſpares the Rod ſpoiles the Childe: *better you correct them here, than God damne them hereafter:* Correction.

hereafter: The Rod is as needful for your Children as their Food; Prov. 22. 15. *Folly is bound in the heart of a Childe, the Rod of Correction shall drive it far from him.* Do this,

1. *Timelily*; a young Twigg is flexible, and easie to be bent; break them of wicked Words and Waies betimes, or else they may break your heart when they are bigger. *Adonijah* was *Davids Darling*, and he was wanting in correcting of him, and he Rebelled before he died, and usurped the Kingdom before his Fathers death: 1 *King.* 1. 5. *Then Adonijah the son of Haggith exalted himself, saying, I will be King; and he prepared his Horsmen and Chariots, and fifty Men to run before him.* Vers. 6. *And his Father had not displeased him at any time, in saying, Why hast thou done so?* —— Too much indulgence will make undutiful and disobedient Children.

2. *Proportionably* to their fault; Do not Correct a small offence *over sharply*, nor an hainous sin *too slightly*; if you are too severe for a small offence, they will hate you: if you are too indulgent in a great offence, they will despise you. This was *Elyes* sin, that he did not correct the hainous sin, and reprove the abominable practise of his Sons with greater severity: 1 *Sam.* 2. 23. *And he said unto them, Why do ye such things? for, I hear of your evil dealings by all this People.* Vers. 24. *Nay, my Sons, for it is no good report that I hear, ye make the Lords People to transgress.* It is no good report! that was too good a word for so hainous wicked Works: it was an abominable thing that was reported by others, and committed

ted by his Sons: But, see what God saith to *Ely*, Vers. 29. *Thou honourest thy Sons above me:* and, God severely punished his Children for their vile offence; and the Father for his *so* cold reproof, as you may read in the following Verses.

3. *Compassionately*; do not Correct your Children in the heate of *Passion*, but with bowels of *compassion:* when the Rod is in your *hand*, let there be tender love in your *heart*.

4. *Discreetly*; Observing the temper and disposition of your Childe which you correct; if you Scourge, and frown upon one, as much as is needful for another, you will discourage him; if you scourge not another, more than this, that is more tender spirited, you will not break him: Correction is like a Medicine, in which the Physitian hath respect to the constitution of the Patient. Children are like Herbs, some, if you cut and tread will grow again; but, if you do as much to other Herbes, you kill them.

5. *Seasonably*; There is much wisdom in Parents, in timeing their Correcting of their Children; if you correct them for some faults before others, you will discourage them; take the fittest season.

6. *Penitently*; When you correct your Children, judge your self first, and repent for your own sin, or else you do but beat your self.

7. *Believingly*; When you exercise your child with the Rod, do you exercise faith upon the Promise.

Thirdly, In *Praying* much for them; many pray for Children before they have them, but neglect Prayer.

glect to pray for them when God hath given them; as though their *being* were a greater blessing than their well-being: you must add Prayer to Instruction and Correction; for, it is not onely your Instruction, nor Correction, but Gods blessing given in to fervent Prayer, that will make your Children good. When you look upon your little Infants as they are sucking at your breasts, or laughing in your faces, or playing in your armes; oh consider the seed of sin that they have in their hearts! that they, by Nature, are the children of wrath; and, when you go to pray for them, use such considerations that might make your heart to mourn over them, and for them: When you consider they are enemies to God, can you not mourn for them upon your knees? when you consider they are *lost* children, except mercy *find* them; that they are damned children except free grace save them: Can you not mourn abundantly, and pray fervently for them? Can you consider they are by Nature, without the Image and Likeness of God, and not be grieved at the heart? that your child is a little Traitor against the King of Heaven; a little Rebel against the glorious God; and, will you not pray that his heart may be changed? Could you weep and grieve if your Child were a Monster, if it had a body of one kind, and an head of another; if it had an Arme too much, or a Leg too much, or little; why, its misery is more by Nature then all this, and yet, can you not mourn in your Prayers for him?

Fourthly,

Fourthly, In *Choosing* for them some lawful Calling and putting them forth unto some Religious familie: Choose not a Calling that hath more snares and temptations attending it, then usually others have; and place them in such families, where they may learn the way to Heaven, as well as the way to be rich in the World: If you put them forth to an ungodly family, you may loose all your former labour in Instruction, Correction, and Prayer: for, will you give your Childe an Antidote, and then care not if he run into a Pesthouse, among persons that have running Plague Sores; or, would you not judge it presumption in any so to do, without a special call? but, the former is greater, and higher, and more dangerous presumption than the latter; in as much as the death of the Body of your Child is endangered by the one; but the damnation of his Soul is endangered by the other. Choosing them a Calling.

Fifthly, In careful *disposing* of them in Marriage; That you Match them to godly Persons, and, if you can, into a godly family; or, to one that hath Religious Relations: *Take heed of Marrying them to the children of the Devil*, though their outward advantage be never so much: Thus *Abraham* took care that his son *Isaac* should not take a Wife of the Daughters of the *Canaanites*, amongst whom he dwelt, *Gen.* 24. 3. If you thus take care for your children, whom God hath continued to you in this great Mortality, you act, in this respect, Disposing them in Marriage.

ſpect, in ſome meaſure anſwerably to ſo great a Mercy.

SECTION XVII.

Duties of Children, whom God hath continued to their Parents.

Secondly, Children, if they would live anſwerably in their Relation, to ſo great a Mercy, as is, Gods ſparing their Parents, and continuing them unto them, muſt be careful of filling up the Duties of their Relation: and, the Duty of Children is ſet down in *Col.* 3. 20. *Children, obey your Parents in all things, for this is well-pleaſing unto the Lord:* In which obſerve,

1. The Charge, Obedience.
2. The Perſons charged; Children, younger, elder, poor or rich.
3. The Perſons to whom this obedience is to be given. Father, Mother, Parents, whether Poor, or Rich.
4. The extent of this obedience; In all things.
5. The limitting and enforcing Reaſon, for this is well-pleaſing to the Lord; therefore the *all things* are to be limitted to things lawful, elſe it would not pleaſe the Lord; but, they muſt in thoſe things, becauſe it pleaſeth God.

Now, if you that are Children would walk worthy of Gods Mercy, in ſparing your Parents to

to you in *this contagious times*, you muſt obey them in theſe Particulars.

1. In receiving Inſtructions from them, in hearkning to their wholſome Counſel and Advice, Prov. 3. 1. *My ſon forget not my Law, but let thine heart keep my Commandments*, *Prov.* 4. 1, 2, 3, 4. and 5. 1, 2, 7. and 6. 20. *&c.* and 7. 1, 2, 3.

2. In ſubmitting to their Correction, without murmuring and repining.

3. In being content with your Diet and Apparel that your Parents provide for you.

4. In yeilding them ſuſtenance and Maintenance if they come to Poverty, if you be able to ſupply them; they gave you maintenance when you could not provide for your ſelves, do you ſo for them, if they need, though you work hard to help them, 1 Tim. 5. 4. *But, if any Widow have Children, or Nephews, let them firſt learn to ſhew piety at home, and to requite their Parents, for that is good and acceptable before God.* Though Children can never (fully) requite their Parents, for they had their being by them; and, what if they have help by you in outward things, you had your being by them, and that is more: Take heed of being aſhamed of your Parents, if they be poor, and you are raiſed to an higher degree in the World than ever they were, but, to diſown them would be impious.

5. In ſubmitting to their choiſe of a Calling for you.

6. In diſpoſing of you in Marriage: Change not your Condition without their Conſent, as *Iſaac*, *Gen.* 24. and *Sampſon*, *Judg.* 14. 1, 2. Nay,

Iſhmael

Ishmael obeyed his Mother in his Marriage, *Gen.* 21.21. and, will you be worse than *Ishmael*?

7. In all things, though they be cross to your humour, though it might not please you, yet, if it please your Parents you must do it. But, that I may not lay a snare for Childrens Consciences, and put a Staff into ungodly Parents hands, to drive their Children to Hell, you must take this distinction of [things,] *viz.*

Things are either,
- Simply good and necessary, and these must be done, though your Parents forbid you; as Praying, Reading Scripture, *&c.*
- Simply evil and unlawful, and these must not be done, though your Parents command you; as to play, or work upon the Lords day, to lie and defraud in dealing.
- Neither good nor evil in their own nature (though every thing is good or evil, considered in all circumstances) and, in all these you must obey your Parents.

And, the reasons of this obedience to your Parents, are such as these.

6 Reasons for these Duties.

1. *Gods command*, Ephes. 6. 1. *Children, obey your Parents in the Lord.* V. 2. *Honour thy Father and Mother, which is the first Commandment with Promise*; That is the first Command with Promise in the second Table; for, there is a Promise

Promise in the second Command of the First Table, *of shewing Mercy unto thousands*, &c.

2. This is *right, or justice*; Ephes. 6. 1. Thou hadst thy being and thy education by thy Parents, therefore it is justice thou shouldest obey them.

3. *Christs Example*; He was obedient to his Parents, Luke 2. 51. *And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them.*

4. *Gods Judgments upon disobedient Children: Absalom* Rebelled against his Father, and God cut him off in the very act of his Rebellion.

5. It *is pleasing to God*: If it were in any thing that would displease God, you must not do it; for you must please your Heavenly Father rather than your Earthly, but, if it be pleasing unto God, you must not deny it; you please God, when you please your Parents in things lawful.

6. God *might punish you with disobedient Children* hereafter, if you are disobedient to your Parents now: Thus Children also will walk so fast answerably to so great a Mercy, as Gods sparing their Parents to them, if they thus obey them.

SECTION XVIII.

Thirdly, The next Relation I consider in a Family, is, the Relation of Masters and Servants, whom God hath spared in this great Mortality; and, if you would live in some measure answerably to this Mercy (as, it is a Mercy to some to have Servants; and, it is a Mercy to

others to have Masters) then you must fill up the duties of your Relation.

Duties of Masters whom God hath continued to Servants.

First, Masters Duties are set down, Col. 4.1. *Masters, give unto your Servants that which is just and equal, knowing, that ye also have a Master in Heaven:* where you have,

1. The Charge that is given, to do that *which is just and equal.*
2. The Persons to whom this Charge is given: *Masters.*
3. The Persons unto whom this justice and equity must be shown: *Servants.*
4. The Reason to enforce it; *knowing that ye have a Master in heaven.* There is no Man, that *is* a Master, but he *hath* a Master, and that is God.

1. Masters must not impose upon their Servants any thing simply unlawful, that is not just; to Work, or carry Burdens upon the Lords day, without necessity, *&c.*

2. Masters must not impose upon their Servants things above their strength, though they be lawful, this is not just.

3. Masters must not deny their Servants convenient Food, nor their due Wages, this is not just.

4. Masters must not turn away their Servants when they are sick, who served them when they were in health and strength, without their consent; this is not just.

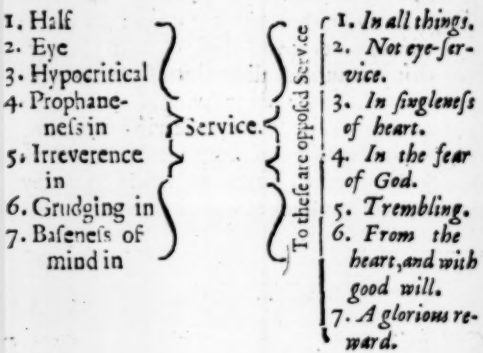
5. Masters must not deny them *necessary* time for

for the performance of their necessary duties unto God, this is neither just nor equal: It is but equity if Servants spend their time in your service, that you should allow them some time for the Service of God, and the saving of their souls: for, to wear out their Bodies in serving you now, and, for want of time to Read and Pray, to have their Soules damned hereafter, would be a very unequal, unjust, and unreasonable thing.

SECT. XIX.

Secondly, Servants, if you would live answerably for the Mercy of God, in sparing you, then performe the Duties God requireth at your hands towards your Masters. The Duty of Servants is set down, Eph. 6. 5. *Servants, be obedient to them that are your Masters, according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of heart, as unto Christ.* Vers. 6. *Not with eye-service, as Men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart.* Vers. 7. *With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to Men.* Vers. 8. *Knowing, that whatsoever good thing any Man doth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.* To this the Apostle addeth; *Servants, obey in all things your Masters, knowing, that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance, for ye serve the Lord Christ*, Col. 3. 22, 23, 24, 25. in both which places the Apostle meets with the usual defects of Servants in their Relation; which are

Duties of Servants whom God hath continued to Masters.



1. Servants must do *all the* service they owe unto their Masters; not to do one thing, and leave another undone, but, you must obey in all things, *i. e.* lawful.

2. Servants must not give *eye service*; That is, onely in their Masters sight and presence, but must be as careful of their Masters business in his absence, as if he were looking on them: they must not do their work as those that are serving Men, who cannot always see them, but as the servants of Christ, serve him, who believe, that he always sees them: and, let Servants remember, that though Masters do not always see them, yet God doth.

3. Servants must performe the Works of their Masters service in *singleness of heart*, with uprightness, and without dissimulation; they must not be hypocrites in Mens service, as they must not in the

Service

Service of God: Servants must do all from obedience to Gods Commands, and yield therefore obedience to wicked Masters in lawful things, 1 *Pet.* 2, 18. *Servants, be subject to your Masters with all fear; not onely to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.* So, to poor Masters, though they can give them but mean wages.

4. They must do it in *the fear of God*: As the servants of God must pray in the fear of God, and hear in the fear of God; so they that are servants to Men, must do their work in the fear of God: then, they must not Curse and Swear at their work, nor talk sinfully, nor speak or sing obscenely.

5. With *reverence* to their Masters, 1 Tim. 6. 1. *Let as many servants as are under the yoke, count their own Masters worthy of all Honour, that the Name of God and his Doctrine be not blasphemed:* If thou serve a poor Master, yet, being thy Master, thou art bound to honour him; else, thou will be a reproach to the Name of God, and his Doctrine.

6. They must not *grudge* the Service they do, but do it from the heart, and with good will: Servants hearts must not be set upon their Masters business, they cannot give away their heart from God: but, they must do their Work from the heart, *i.e.* willingly, cheerfully.

7. They must not onely aime at *the wages* they have from their Masters; that is poor, and low, and sordid to work and labour for such a reward; but, as those that know, if they do their service, (be it never so mean and servile) in obedience to Gods

command, and for his glory, they shall have a reward in Heaven: *God will reward the mean service of a poor servant with an eternal Crown.*

8. They must be *faithful in* their Masters business; they must not purloin, steal, and secretly convey away any thing of their Masters Estate, Money or Goods; or sell it at under-rate to his Masters real prejudice and dammage, by private contract between himself and the buyer, to consider him for his cheap Bargain. Tit. 2. 9. *Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own Masters, and to please them well in all things, not answering again.* Vers. 10. *Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity, that they may adorn the Doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.* When thy hand is in thy Masters Box, and thou art pilfring away his Money, to Game, to keep Company, or spend any way without his knowledge, this is Theft; and, God seeth thee, though he do not: and, if thou hast purloined, or stole any thing, thou art bound to restore it, if thou canst, and, to confess thy fault and be humbled, and do so no more.

9. They must be *frugal* for their Masters; that, though they steal nothing from them, yet they may sin, by suffering their Masters Goods to be wasted; as Food to be cast away, and many things to be spent and consumed when there is no need: this is not to shew all fidelity to your Masters. So *Jacob*, Gen. 31. 36, 37. 38, 39, 40. *That which was torn of beasts I brought not unto thee; I bare the loss of it: of my hands didst*

didst thou require it, whether stollen by day, or stollen by night.

10. They must not *answer again* out of a murmuring spirit, nor give word for word; that, if their Master rebukes them for their sin, they must not speak as fast as he: nay, though a Master should speak Wrathfully, and in unjust Anger, yet they must not Answer Perversely to them again, but with meekness and silence (except they require, or give leave) go about their Imployment, committing their cause to God, who will right them, if their Masters wrong them, Col. 3. 25. *But, he that doth wrong, shall receive for the wrong which he hath done:* and, there is no *respect of Persons.* God regards not Mens outward conditions; he regards not the Mistriss more than the Maid: nor the Master more than the Man; but judgeth righteously betwixt the greatest and the meanest.

11. They must remember, when they are obedient in their Masters Service, they are *serving the Lord Christ*: What a poor servant doth in servile Labour, in the meanest, lowest imployment, he is serving of God: and, this might sweeten to him more difficult and unpleasing Work.

Thus I have done with this direction, in which all Men, in one capicity or other, herein considered, are concerned to make improvement of Gods Preserving of them in

time of ſo great Contagion; by being eminently exemplary in the Conditions, Capacity, Relations, wherein they ſtand; which, if they do (*cæteris paribus*) they live in ſome meaſure anſwerable to ſo great a Mercy.

DIRECT:

DIRECTION V.

HAth God spared you in a time of Pestilence, then if you would live answerable, *diligently watch against secret sins, and let your special care be about the hidden and secret things in Religious Duties.* God hath kept you in his Chambers, *Isa.*26.20. *Come my people, enter thou into thy Chambers, and shut thy doors about thee; hide thy self as it were for a little moment until the indignation be overpast.* God hath hid you from Judgment in the secret Chambers of his Protection, and will you hide your sins in the secret corners of your hearts? Or will you allow your self to sin because you are in your secret Chambers? Or will this be to live worthy of Gods secret Protection of you, to commit secret sins against God? That you are preserved this is *visible*; all that see you walking in the streets know this: But Gods way of preserving you was not only by visible means, as Antidotes and Cordials, but by the *invisible* Guard of holy Angels, Psal.91.10. *There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any Plague come nigh thy dwelling.* Ver.11. *For he shall give his Angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy waies.* Ver.12. *They shall bear thee up in their hands; lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.* Watch against secret sins.

The

The reason why you have been preserved is, because God hath caused you to dwell in the secret place of the most high, and hath made you to abide under the shadow of the Almightie, *Psal.*91.1. When the Pestilence was walking in darkness, and the Arrows of the Almightie were secretly shot and flying abroad, He kept you in the secret of his Pavilion, *Psal.*37.5. *For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his Pavilion: in the secret of his Tabernacle he shall hide me, he shall set me upon a rock.* As all *visible* means would not have been effectual for your preservation, without Gods *secret* and invisible watching over you: So abstaining only from *visible* sins, and performing only *that* of duty, which is visible, will not be a suitable, nor answerable return for this great mercie: Therefore my advice unto you is, that as Gods goodness to you hath been in a *secret* way of preservation, so your care should especially be about *secret things*, and that in two respects.

{In abstaining from secret sins.
{In maintaining secret duties.

Abstain from secret sins.

First, *Be careful to abstain from secret sins.* Do not cherish sins in your hearts and thoughts, though they should never proceed to outward act: For a man whom God hath kept in time of Plague, might be no open Swearer, no visible Drunkard, nor live in open wickedness, and yet might walk unworthy of Gods mercy to him. And here I shall answer these two Questions.

1. *What are those Considerations whereby a man should*

should urge his heart to abstaine from heart and secret sins?

2. *What are the helps and means for inabling of a man to abstain from heart and secret sins?*

Quest. 1. What are those Considerations whereby a Christian should urge his heart to abstain from heart sins, and secret sins; not to let into the secrets of his heart what he can, by watchfulness prevent, and not to *allow* that which notwithstanding all his diligence he cannot prevent. For there is great difference betwixt *having* sin in the heart, and *regarding* or allowing sin in the heart, *Psal.*66.18. *If I regard iniquity in my heart the Lord will not hear me.* A Christian may have, yea, cannot in this life but have sin in his heart, but this (not allowed, but groaned under, and lamented for,) shall not hinder the audience of his prayers, nor the salvation of his soul. But the regarding and allowing of it will prevent both.

SECT. I.

Considerations to keep you from secret sins.

I. Considerations to watch against secret sins. God setteth secret sins in the light of his countenance.

GOD sets *your secret sins in the light of his countenance*, Psal.90.8. You can never sin so secretlie, as to hide your sins from God. Study well these Scriptures, *Psal.* 139. 1, to 17, vers. *Jer.*23.24. *Heb.*4.13. *Prov.*5.21. *For the waies of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings.* Whether your waies are good

good or evil, open or secret, they are before the eyes of the Lord, נכח *rectà è regione*, right over Gods eyes. He pondereth, פלס *He weigheth them in scales*; and many of our actions he findeth to be too light. There are some sins so secret that *other* men might not know them; and some are so secret that a man might not know them himself; as sins of Ignorance, *Psal.*19.12. *Who can understand his errours? Cleanse thou me from secret faults.* But no sin can be said to be secret in respect of God; *Others see some sin in you, you may see more in your self; But God seeth all:* because he is omniscient.

But there are many sins which are so secret that we our selves see them not:

The causes of this are
1. Imperfection of self-knowledge.
2. Excess of self-love.
3. Deceitfulness of sin.
4 Closeness of sin.
5. Want of watchfulness.

But there is no sin can be hid from God, for God seeth the Nature, Number, and Aggravations of secret sins.

Many indeed have vailes for their sins that they may not be discerned by men, but God looks through them: Let me instance in these following sins, that appear to men in the *shape* of grace, but in the sight of God are manifest sins: Or sins vailed and masked with plausible pretences of good, yet are naked to the sight of God.

1. *Pride*

1. *Pride covered with humility*; A proud perſon often appears in the ſhape of an humble man. In abaſing of himſelf, diſcommending himſelf, that another may commend him, crying down himſelf, that another may cry him up; by diſpraiſing himſelf he would *force* and *wreſt* a commendation from other men: But if he diſcommend himſelf, do you diſcommend him too; if he ſay ſuch a thing was meanly done, if you ſay, you think ſo too, a proud man cannot bear it; he cannot hear another ſay of him what he ſaith of himſelf: But this ſecret pride God ſeeth. 2 Maſked ſins detected.

2. *Hypocriſie maſked with Zeal*; Many ſeem to be forward in good waies, and zealous in good works; but Self is the end, 2 *Kings* 10.16. *Come ſee my Zeal*, &c.

3. *Secret love of the World, covered with pretence of care for their Family*; Many have a cloak for the hiding of their covetouſneſs; of which you read, 1 *Theſ.*2.5. *For neither at any time uſed we flattering words, nor a cloak of covetouſneſs, God is witneſs*; this is ſeen by God.

4. *Secret hatred againſt mens perſons, covered with pretended zeal againſt mens ſins*, or covered with plauſible expreſſions of love and amitie. *Judas* had murdered Chriſt in his heart, and yet calls him Maſter with his mouth, and kiſſeth him, Mat.26.49. *Many have words ſmoother than oyl, yet have hatred ſharper than ſwords*, Pſal.55.21.

5. *Vain-glory hidden from men by pretended charity*; Many will do good, relieve the poor, help thoſe that be in diſtreſs, but they aime at eſteem

esteem amongst men. *Matth.* 6. 1, 2, 3, 4.

6. *Self-interest hidden from men by pretence of the good of mens souls, and the glory of God*; so a preaching hypocrite may pretend to lay out himself for the good of mens souls, and yet may use his Ministry only as a trade to get a living by it.

7. *Blasphemous hard thoughts of God, might be hid from men by speaking good words of God.*

8. *Inward murmurings repinings against Gods Providences, may be hid from men by words of great submission to the will of God.*

9. *Inward fleshly lustings of heart, and contemplative uncleanness, may be kept secret from men by chaste discourse.* He may love the presence of a person that is occasion of such secret uncleanness, and commit adultery in his heart, and the person not know of it, and the offender speaking chastly all this while: But I warn you in the name of God to strive against these sins, for though they are secret to men, yet God sets them in the light of his countenance. There are three eyes upon you when you are in secret, *viz.*

1. The eyes of Angels good and bad, and they may see much of your secret wickedness.

2. The eye of Conscience, and this may see more secret sin, than the Angels see in you, the very thoughts of your heart.

3. The eye of God, and his eye seeth more than the Conscience, 1 *Joh.* 3. 20. And this view that God hath of thy secret sins when he sets them in

in the light of his countenance hath these four properties.

First, It is *a clear and distinct view*: God seeth all the evil there is in thy secret sin. We have a confused sight of sin, and a dim sight of sin: we see not so much evil in the greatest sin as there is in the least: We *see* not so much evil in open Prophaneness as indeed there *is* in a vain thought: But God seeth all distinctly. What a man hath before his eyes, that is a *suitable object*, at an *equal distance*, and having a *necessary medium* he seeth distinctly. 4 Properties of Gods view of secret sins.

Secondly, It is a *full view*; As God seeth all the evil in any one secret sin, so he seeth all thy secret sins. *Man may know none of them; thou knowest some of them, but God knoweth all.* When thou turnest thy back to go into secret to commit sin, Remember then, *thou art before Gods face.*

Thirdly, It is a *constant view*; What we have seen with our eyes might be quite razed out of our memories, but not out of Gods knowledge; and when God is said to remember our iniquities no more, it is not to be understood of real Oblivion, but gracious remission.

Fourthly, It is a *judicial view*; If we speak of the secret sins of an hypocrite or a wicked man, then God sets them in his sight, as a Judge sets before him the crimes of a Malefactor, that they may be read; be accused, convicted, and executed. If we speak of the secret sins of Gods people,

people, God sets them before him as a *Father* doth the miscarriages of his child, not to disinherite him for it, but to correct him and chastise him.

These are the properties of Gods viewing our secret sins, and shall not this move thee to watch against them, and abstain from them? Or hast thou not done that in secret in the sight of God, which thou wouldst have been ashamed to do openly in the sight of men? There are six comfortable expressions (among others) which the Scripture useth, to set forth Gods free pardon of our sins, *viz.*

That he
- Casts them behind his back, *Isa.*38.17.
- Blots them out, *Isa.*43.25.
- Casts them into the depths of the Sea, *Mic.*7.19
- Remembers them no more,
- Will be merciful to our unrighteousness, *Heb.*8.12.
- Hides his face from our sins, *Psal.*51.9.

There are also six terrible expressions (among others) which the Scripture useth to set forth Gods displeasure against men for sin, *viz.*

That he
- Writes them in a book, *Rev.*20.12.
- Seals them in a bag, *Job* 14.17.
- Remembers them, *Hos.*7.2.
- Marks them, *Psal.*130.3.
- Will visit them, *Jer.* 14.10. and 5.9.
- Sets them in the light of his countenance, *Psal.*90.8.

If therefore there be any thing in the believing thoughts of Gods viewing your secret sins, (as doubtless there is very much) be careful that you

you abſtain from them, and not allow your ſelf in them.

SECT. II.

II. Secreſie is no ſecurity.

TO keep you from ſecret ſins conſider, *That ſecrecy in ſinning is no ſecurity to the ſinner*; This is a conſequent of the former, becauſe God ſeeth you in ſecret, therefore you are not ſafe, though your ſin be ſecret. You may ſecure your credit and reputation awhile, by keeping your ſin ſecret from men, but not your happineſs and ſalvation. While your ſin is ſecret you may not be reproached for it by men, but you ſhall be damned for it by God, if it be allowed and not ſincerely repented of. Many ſhall be openly damned for ſecret ſins. Read *Pſal.*64. throughout.

III. It is a ſign of ſincerity.

This will be a *notable diſcovery of the ſincerity of thy heart, if thou dareſt not allow thy ſelf in ſecret ſins.* An Hypocrites greateſt care is converſant about things viſible and manifeſt, *viz.* His Converſation, Profeſſion, or Open tranſgreſſions, theſe are viſible.

But the things that are ſecret and hid from the eyes of men, in thoſe he is careleſs and negligent. But a true child of God, though he is not careleſs of his converſation, yet he is eſpecially mindful of his affections, and of the ſecret

frame of his heart, and of the sins that lye lurking within him.

IV. God judgeth not by outward appearances.

Consider, God *doth not esteem of men by what they seem to be to others, but by what they really are.* God doth not judge as man judgeth; *Men judge of the heart by the actions of the life, but God judgeth of the actions by the heart.* Men judge of that which is secret and invisible by that which is open and visible, but God judgeth of that which is open and visible, by that which is secret and invisible, *Mat.*23.27. *Woe unto you Scribes, Pharisees, Hypocrites, for ye are like unto whited Sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead mens bones, and of all uncleanness.* Ver.28. *Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within are full of Hypocrisie and Iniquity.* Luk.16.15. *And he said unto them, ye are they which justifie your selves before men, but God knoweth your hearts: For that which is highly esteemed amongst men, is abomination in the sight of God.* A man might be applauded for that by men, for which he shall be condemned by God. That which might set a man high in the estimations of men, might be an abomination unto God.

V. To allow secret sin is great Impiety.

It is *hainous Impiety for a man to encourage himself to sin because he is in secret.* 2 Kings 17.9. *And the children of Israel did secretly those things that were not right against the Lord their God.*——

There

There are many great sins wrapped up in this. As,

1. Damnable Infidelity; They believe not God seeth them, *Psal.*94.7,8,9.

2. Desperate Security; They hide God from their eyes, and then think they are safe.

3. Deep Stupidity; A degree further than the former.

4. Daring Insolency; It is bold presumption to sin before Gods face.

VI. Secret sins provoke God

Secret sins do provoke God as well as open sins; God is not like the sinner that hath better thoughts of sin, because it is secret: The openness of sin might add something to the eclipsing of Gods glory, and to Gods dishonour, but it addeth nothing to Gods hatred of sin, because Gods hatred to sin, *as sin*, is infinite.

VII. And grieve the Spirit

Secret sins will grieve the Spirit of God; And causeth him to withhold his influences from thy heart, and to withdraw his presence from thy soul. As,

1. Secret sins will cause the Spirit of God to withdraw his *witnessing* presence, and to suspend his testimony.

2. They will cause him to withdraw his *comforting* presence, that thou shalt not have those joyes that thou wast use to find when thou wast more careful to watch against secret sins.

3. They will cause him to withdraw his

quickning presence, that thy heart will be left more dead, and more dull, and thy affections will be more flat and cold.

4. They will cause him to withdraw his *Assisting* presence; that thou shalt not be so able to perform duty, to resist temptation, to bear affliction. Thus secret sins will make you great losers by grieving and quenching the Spirit of God.

VIII. And destroy your peace.

Secret sins will exceedingly disturb the peace of thy Conscience, They will make great gashes in thy soul; they will wound surely, they will wound surely and deeply; They may make thee go with a sorrowful heart unto thy grave; They may cost thee many a groan, and sigh and tear, many a prayer and strong cry to God before thy peace may be restored, and thy Conscience healed, and thy heart bound up. They may be the breaking of thy bones, and thy heart too, that thou mayst think God is thine enemy.

IX. Hinder grace.

Secret sins will hinder the growth of thy grace; A constant course of allowed secret sinning, argues the *Nullity* of grace; and secret sins, through carelessness committed by Gods people, will hinder much the *encrease* of grace. They will be like a frost to the blossom; Like a Worm and Caterpiller to the fruits of the Earth. Secret sins by experience you will find will much hinder your,

1. Faith;

1. Faith; That you shall not believe so stedfastly.
2. Desire; You shall not thirst after God and Christ so strongly.
3. Love; You will not love God and Christ so Ardently.
4. Delight; You will not delight in God so frequently.
5. Hope; You will not hope for Heaven so livelily.
6. Evidences; You will not lay claim to heaven so confidently.

Secret sins will hinder your fervent praying, and will stop the Audience of your prayers. They will exceedingly damp your affections at the throne of grace, and make you sneak in the presence of God, that you cannot have that liberty and confidence in prayer, because Conscience will be *interlining* thy prayers, and say, Thou prayest against this sin, and yet thou didst not watch against it, but didst knowingly commit it. They will stop thy mouth that thou canst not *speak*, and they will stop Gods ears, that he will not *hear*, Psal.66.18. *If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.* X. And fervent prayer, and prevent audience.

Secret sins will harden thy heart, and make thee more prone to commit open sins. They will strengthen the evil habit of sin, and make thee more incline to visible transgressions, and increase the propensity XI. Do harden.

penſity of thy heart to greater evils. Thus *Judas* giving way to ſecret covetouſneſs did ripen the inclination of his heart more and more to betray his Maſter.

XII. Stop communications of Gods ſecrets.

Secret ſins will ſtop the Communications of Gods ſecrets to thee; There are ſome ſecrets of God, which he doth not communicate to any man in this life, *Deut.*29.29. *Secret things belong to the Lord our God: but things revealed belong to us, and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this Law.* But there are ſome ſecrets of God that he doth reveal unto his people, and to thoſe that make conſcience of ſecret ſins, *Prov.*3.32. *But his ſecret is with the righteous.* Pſal.25.14. *The ſecret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will ſhew them his Covenant.* The *Revealed* things of the Goſpel are *ſecret* things to wicked men; the Goſpel is hid to them, 2 *Cor.*4.4. *Regeneration* is a ſecret to them. *Faith* in Chriſt is a ſecret to them. The *joyes* of the Spirit, and the *comforts* of the Holy Ghoſt are things hidden from them. But if you dare not allow your ſelf in ſecret ſinning, you ſhall have many ſecret Intimations of the love of God unto your ſoul; many ſecret illapſes of his Spirit into your heart.

XIII. If you make conſci-

If you make conſcience of ſecret ſins you ſhall have an open reward. What Chriſt ſaith concerning ſecret duties, *Mat.*6.6. *But thou when thou prayeſt enter*

enter into thy Closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. This is true also of abstaining from secret sinnings, God will reward you openly.

ence of secret sin, you shall have an open reward.

Be most careful against secret sins because in these thou hast least help, and least assistance from others. If thy sin be visible, thy *friend* may *reprove* thee, and he may help to recover thee. If thy sin be visible, thy *enemy* may *reproach* thee for it, and that may occasion thy repentance. But if thy sin be secret, thou wilt not have these helps nor occasions of repentance; and therefore where thou art least capable of advantages and helps from others, therein be the greatest friend unto thy self.

XIV. In these you have least help from others.

Thus if you would walk answerably for Gods hiding of you in the secret of his Tabernacle in time of danger live not in a course of secret sins; and for your help herein I shall next proceed to the second Question. *viz.*

SECT. III.

Que. 2. Helps against secret sins: God his eye.

WHat are the helps and means for the enabling of a Christian to abstain from heart-sins, and secret sins.

1. Fill your mind with actual, believing thoughts of *Gods all-seeing eye.* When you are tempted to sin in secret, consider God *seeth* you:

All the thoughts of your heart, and all the motions of your affections are known to him, 2 Cor.4.2. *But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the Word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth, commending our selves to every mans conscience in the sight of God.* Psal.139.11. *If I say the darkness shall cover me, even the night shall be light about me.* Ver.12. *Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee, but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee.* It is the Atheism and Infidelity of mens hearts that encourageth them to sin, because it is secret.

Eye judgment to come.

2. Firmly believe, and often *think of the judgement to come.* Then will God make manifest every secret thing; The thoughts of the heart shall then be revealed. If thou wouldst not have thy secret sin produced at the last day, and published before all the world, do not commit it, *Eccl.*12.14. *For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.* Rom.2.16. *In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my Gospel.* 1 Cor.4.5. *Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both shall bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts, and then shall every man have praise of God.*

Deep hatred.

3. Get a *deep rooted hatred in thy heart to sin.* He that hateth sin *truly* will not indulge himself in committing sin *secretly*: For true hatred of sin will set the soul with strongest opposition against it,

it, at all times, and all places: Hatred to sin *as sin*, will be to *all sin*, whether open or secret. He that hates a Toade, will hate it in his Chamber or Closet, as well as in the Field; yea, the nearer it is to him (if in his Bed) his hatred is raised so much the more: and, the *nearer sin is to your heart, the more you should hate it.* He that can sin secretly, when he will not openly, it is not because he hates the *sin*, but because he hates the *disgrace*, which that sin would expose him to before Men.

4. Possess *thy heart with the true fear of God*: Fear of shame, and lessening our esteem among Men, might keep from open sins; but the fear of God doth steel and Antidote the heart against all sins: When our restraint from sin is terminated in God, it will be a general preservative against all sorts of sin. True fear.

5. Get, *and increase in uprightness of heart*; the more of sincerity, the less in secret sinning. Hypocrisie is consistent with a constant course of secret sin, but sincerity of heart doth diminish the acts and habits of sin. Uprightness of heart.

6. *Make it your great design to have the approbation of God*: He that doth hunt after the commendation of Men, will be good when Men do see him; but, he that seekes for the approbation of God, endeavours to be good at all times, and in all places: Rom. 2. 29. *But, he is a Jew, which is one inwardly, and Circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, and not in the Letter, whose praise is not of Men, but of God.* 2 Tim. 2. 15. *Study to shew thy self approved unto God.* Design Gods approbation.

Be

Be watchful.

7. *Be very watchful over your heart when you are alone: and over your outward Senses when you are in Company.* He that doth not diligently watch, will frequently sin: there will be many secret stirrings of Unbelief in your heart, and of Pride, and of Vain-Thoughts, either *injected* by the Devil, or *arising* from the Corruption in your own heart: A secret enemy must be watched more narrowly, and so must secret sins.

Suppress first motions of sin.

8. *Suppress the first motions of sin:* crush this Cockatrice in the Egge: do not dally with secret Temptations unto Sin: abstain from every appearance of secret sins: If you are too much given to contemplative Uncleanness, avoid such things as may occasion it, as beholding of Objects, *&c.*

Sense of Gods love.

9. *Get a deep Impression of Gods kindness and mercy into thy soul:* Many of Gods Mercies to thee are secret Mercies, which none can infallibly see in thee, but thy self: as Grace, and the love of God shed abroad in thy heart: and, let the sense of Gods secret love to thee keep thee from secret sinnings against God, then wilt thou say with *Joseph*, when he was tempted to secret uncleanness, Gen. 39. 7, 9, 10. *How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?*

Secret duties.

10. If you *would be kept from secret sins, be much in secret duties*: He that hath all his duties abroad, will have a nest of secret sins at home: And this brings me to the second general Head about secret Good.

SECTION.

SECTION IV.

Secret duties.

Secondly, Maintain secret Duties, and especially mind the secret things of Publick Duties: this part consisteth of two Branches,

{ Maintain secret Duties.
{ Minde Secret things in Publick Duties.

I. Keep up *a constant course of secret Duties: Be much with God when you are alone:* Let not all your Religion lie without doores: especially be much in the Practise of these four Duties in secret.

1. Be much in *secret Prayer:* This hath been the practice of the holy Men of God, so *Jacob*, Gen. 32. 24. *And Jacob was left alone: and there wrastled a Man with him, while the breaking of the day.* In this you have the Example of Christ himself, who was much in secret Prayer, Mat. 14. 23. *And when he had sent the Multitudes away, he went up into a Mountain apart to Pray, and when the evening was come he was there alone.* You have some secret burdens upon your heart, you have some secret and hidden workings of sin in your soul, which is not convenient for you to express in the hearing of others; take time then to do this when you are *alone* in secret: You have the *command* of Christ also for this secret duty, as well as his *practise* and example, *Mat.* 6. 6.

2. Be freqent *in self-examination in secret:* When you are alone, be much in conversing with

with your ſelf, and often in looking down into your own heart, enquiring after the truth of grace, and your growth therein: after the Mortification of ſin, and your growth therein: Pſal.4.4. *Stand in awe and ſin not: commune with your own hearts upon your bed, and be ſtill. Commune* with your ſelf, whether you ſet a due valuation upon the meanes of Grace: whether you thrive in holineſs, according to the time and meanes that you have had: *Commune* with your ſelf, whether your Converſation be ſuitable to your Profeſſion, and, as becomes the Goſpel: whether you are fit to die, and prepared for another World: in your ſecret Chamber commune with your own hearts about ſuch things as theſe.

3. Be much in *ſecret Reading* of the Word of God: A Worldling, when he is alone, will ſpend much time in Reading over his Writings, his Bonds and Bills, his Leaſes and Acquittances: and, will not you take as much pains in ſecret reading of the Word of God, which are the Writings upon which you muſt both build your Evidences for Heaven, and try them by.

4. Be much *in ſecret meditation*: When you are alone, let your thoughts be dwelling upon the Life to come, in thinking of your future happineſs; Oh, what inward warmth may you have, when you are alone, if you would but fill your minde with ſome believing fore-thoughts of the Life to come.

SECTION.

SECTION V.

II. *Minde ſecret things in Publick Duties:* As your preſervation is viſible, but (as I have noted before) the moſt effectual meanes of your preſervation were ſecret and inviſible: you have not ſeen the way that God hath taken in keeping you; he hath ſecretly kept you by his Power; he hath given a ſecret Charge to his Angels over you; ſo, let your Duties (that God requires ſhould be Publick and Viſible) be ſo: But then, let your principal care be about the *ſecret* and *inviſible* things of *publick*, and *viſible* duties. Secret things in Publick duties.

The ſecret and inviſible things in publick duties, which we are to mind, are {Good, Bad.

I will inſtance in ſix of each of them.

Six things in a gracious heart in publick Duties, are ſecret and inviſible.

1. The *communion* that a gracious heart hath with God in publick duties, is ſecret and inviſible: You may hear a Mans Expreſſions, and you may ſee his Teares, and hear his Groanes, but, whether he have true communion with God, is ſuch a ſecret, that none can know but himſelf.

2. The *joyes* that a Chriſtian hath in publick duties, are ſecret and inviſible joyes: expreſſions of joy and praiſe may be heard, and outward diſcoveries of joy there may be, but this joy it ſelf is a ſecret thing: Whether you have indeed true ſpiritual joy in publick duties, none can know but your ſelf.

3. The

3. The *principle* that puts a Man upon publick duties, is a secret and invisible thing: Whether you Pray or Preach, or do any publick duty, out of a Principle of love and fear of God, is such a secret, that none can tell but your self.

4. The *manner*, in which publick duties are performed, is a secret and invisible thing: Whether there be the exercise of Faith, and Repentance for Sin, and love to God, and desire after Spiritual things, is such a secret, that by-standers cannot know.

5. The *end* a Man propounds unto himself in publick duties, is secret and invisible: Whether a Duty be done for the *glory* of God, for the *good* of others, for the enjoying more *communion* with God, for more *strength* against sin, or whether it be for self-interest, and carnal ends, is onely known to a Mans own Conscience: Your duties Men may see, but your end they cannot see.

6. The *peculiar aim* and design of a gracious soul, in publick duties, against some *peculiar sin*, and secret corruption, is a secret and invisible thing: a Man may be heard to pray against a bosome, darling lust, but, whether his design is to get down the power of this sin, is onely known unto himself. These be the six things in publick duties that are secret, which you must especially labour after in all such duties.

SECTION.

SECTION VI.

SIx things in *publick* duties, that are evil, but yet *secret* and *invisible*: as there hath been some secret *danger* which you have been in, when you have not discerned it, and, some secret *infection* God hath kept you from; so in publick duties (the same may be in secret duties also) there are some secret evils you are to watch against. Secret evils in publick duties to be avoided.

1. There may be secret *unbeliefe* lurking in the heart, when a Man in Prayer is pleading particular Promises with his mouth: you may hear a man urge the Promises of God for removal of evil, for obtaining of good; but, whether he act faith upon these Promises, or whether there be not in the mean while secret unbelief, doubting of the truth of this Promise, or especially of the application of it to himself, is known onely to himself, it is a secret to those that joyn with him.

2. *Hypocrisie* in publick duties is a secret thing: Whether your heart be upright and sincere with God, or false and hypocritical, is a secret unto others; *yea*, sometimes it is such a secret that might not be known by a Man himself.

3. *Inward-heart-Pride* in publick duties is a secret thing: A Man may be full of self-loathing-expressions, and of humble gestures, and yet his heart might be lifted up with spiritual pride, and self admirations, and towring thoughts of his own worth and excellency, and suitableness and freedom of expression, and a by-stander cannot perceive it.

4. *Dulness*

4. *Dulneſs and deadneſs* of heart in duty is a ſecret thing: A Man might have lively expreſſions in publick Prayers, and ſeeming warmth of affection, and ſuch things that might affect and warm the hearts of others; and yet his own heart be dull and lukewarm, yea quite cold in that duty.

5. *Wandring thoughts*, in publick duties, are ſecret things: A man may uſe the Name of God, and the Attributes of God, and yet his thoughts may be upon ſomething elſe: others may ſee you engaged in the duty, and ſee your outward geſtures, but are ſtrangers to the ſecret wandrings of your mind.

6. The *inclination* of the heart to ſin, in publick duties, is a ſecret thing: A Man may confeſs ſin, and bewaile it with Tears, and beg for power againſt it, and yet he may have a *ſecret inclination* of heart to this very ſin, and ſecret purpoſes of heart to keep it, and a ſecret *fear*, leaſt God ſhould hear his Prayers, which he makes againſt this ſin; Whether you hate that ſin in your heart, which you bewaile with your Tongue, is known onely to your ſelf: and, if indeed you know it your ſelf, it is a good degree of ſelf-knowledge. Thus, as God hath kept you in an inviſible manner, and *moſt* by inviſible and ſecret means, and preſerved you from ſecret and inviſible danger that you have been in: If you would live *in ſome meaſure anſwerably to ſo great a Mercy*, you muſt have a ſpecial care of minding the ſecret and inviſible things in Chriſtianity, and abſtain from ſecret and inviſible ſins.

DIRECT-

DIRECTION VI.

Since you live after the Plague, be dead to the World.

HAth God spared you in time of Pestilence; *Then be dead unto the World, and to things below*: Take heed that you do not returne with *too great* an eagernes after the Affairs of this world; as if you had not seen *such sights*, as you have seen, of Death, and the vanity of the World: You are not dead in your Grave; let this Mercy move you to be dead to the World, and sinful Affections: You are living *in* the World, but, you must be dead *to* the World. It is to be feared, that there are many will be as eagerly bent after the things of this World, as they were before; notwithstanding the Course that God hath taken by *smarting* Judgments, to weane them from the World: That will be like unto a Stream stopped and dammed up; when it gets over the Bankes, and the obstruction is removed, runneth down with greater force. God hath put many by their way of Trade, for some *Moneths*; Now take heed, that through over-much eagernes, to regain what loss you have sustained by the forbearance of your Calling, you do not let out too much of your heart and affections upon these things; nor give them more of your time, than you can well al-

low from the *necessary* Duties of Gods immediate Worship, and the things that do concerne the state of your Soules in the life to come.

Be dead to the { Profits, Honours, Pleasures, Wisdom, } of this World.

SECTION I.

To the Profits of the world.

I. SHould not *you be dead to, and take heed of returning, in your love, back again unto the Riches of the World*, after such a Judgment as this hath been? To prevent an *over-eager* pursuit of the Riches and Profits of this World, when (by the removal of this Judgment) you have opportunity of returning to your Callings; consider.

Are corruptible. Hurtful.

1. The Riches of this world are *corruptible* riches; they are perishing treasures: Silver and Gold are things *corrupting* others, and are *corruptible* in themselves, 1 *Pet.* 1. 18, 19. But, you have an incorruptible Kingdom and Crown before you to strive after, reserved in Heaven for believers, and for those that are so vehemently set for Heaven, that they will take it by force.

Unprofitable.

2. The riches of this world are *unprofitable* riches; therefore be not too eager in your pursuit of *unprofitable profits*: They cannot profit you in time of greatest need. Have not you had the experience of the unprofitableness of riches? that they are unprofitable (1.) For diverting of Judgments

ments, or removing evils that come upon you; whether *temporal*, as Sickneſs, Plague, Death; or *ſpiritual*, as Hardneſs of Heart, Blindneſs of Minde, Terrors of Conſcience; none of all theſe can be removed by worldly riches. (2.) For the procuring of good; whether *temporal*, for the Body, as Health in time of Sickneſs, or Eaſe in time of Pain; or *ſpiritual*, for the Soul, either Grace, or Comfort, or Glory; if Conſcience be wounded, they cannot heale your Conſciences, nor comfort your Hearts.

Hurtful.

3. The riches of this world are oftentimes *hurtful* to the owner and poſſeſſor of them, Eccleſ. 5. 13. *There is a ſore evil which I have ſeen under the Sun, namely, riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt. Grace and Chriſt can never hurt you:* but, your riches may, by being *clogs* to your affections in holy duties; by being *ſnares* and temptations to you in your converſe in the world; by *increaſing* your account, when you have not well improved them.

Uncertain.

4. The riches of this world are *uncertain* riches, 1 *Tim.* 6. 17. after you have got them, you may preſently loſe them: The loſs of outward riches may ariſe,

1. By Men; by Force and Power; by fraud and deceit.

2. By Caſualty; your Houſes may be conſumed with flames of Fire.

3. By Gods ſecret Curſe, Hag. 1. 6. —*He that earneth wages, earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes.*

Eaſily valued.

5. The riches that Men get in this world, are

easily valued: A Mans Estate is easily computed; But there are riches in Christ, which are *unsearchable*: seek and search after more of them, *Ephes.* 3. 8.

Unsatisfying. 6. When you have got them they will not satisfie your desires, *Eccles.* 5. 10.

To the Honours of the World. II. *Should not you be dead to the honours of this World*, which will be a bait to many after such a *Judgment*? Should not you, who are *yet alive* to behold the Graves of some Honourable Persons, *now* in the dust, call off your heart from seeking after them? Have you not seen, that Death respects not the Honourable more than the Ignoble? the Reverend and Esteemed no more than the Mean and Contemptible? Those that have Honourable Names and Titles, Honourable Friends and Relations, Honourable Callings and Imployments, Honourable Preferments and Enjoyments, are *equalized* in the Grave with others: And, have not you seen some fall? and, heard of others in this Judgment, and yet, after all this; set your heart upon the Honours of this world?

To the pleasures of the World. III. *Should not you be dead to the pleasures of this World*; which will be snares for others? Should you, after such a Judgment as *this*, give your self to live a *sensual flesh-pleasing* life? and spend your time in needless delights and recreations? when you have heard so many *dying* Men complain of the *loss* of time, when they were well, and the

want

want of time when they came to die? Conſider what theſe Pleaſures be, that you are ſo much addicted to; that ſuch ſadning ſorrowful ſights, that you have ſeen, will not wean you from them: Nay, when Gods ſmarting Rod upon your own body, by the Plague, will not imbitter your worldly pleaſures and delights; but, you will go out of ſuch a *dreadful* Judgment of God, to your *Gamings* and *Sports*; to the pleaſing of the fleſh, in ſatisfying the luſts and deſires thereof, in acts of uncleanneſs.

Conſider theſe (1.) are *ſhort* pleaſures, they are but for a little while; they are paſſing away while you are at them: But, theſe *ſhort* pleaſures may bring you to *eternal* torments and endleſs woe, Heb. 11. 25. *Chooſing rather to ſuffer afflictions with the People of God, then to enjoy the pleaſures of ſin for a ſeaſon.* (2.) By *giving up* your ſelves unto theſe Pleaſures, you deprive your ſelves of the Pleaſures of Gods Houſe in his Ordinances, which others drink of, *Pſal.* 36. 8. (3.) You deprive your ſelf of the Pleaſures of Gods Houſe *above* in Heaven; of the Rivers of Pleaſures which are at Gods right hand for evermore, *Pſal.* 16. 11. (4.) Theſe pleaſures are more *bruiſh* pleaſures, and do but delight the more bruiſh, *i. e.* ſenſitive part in Man: The rational Soul, *as ſuch*, is not delighted in the pleaſures of the Fleſh, in eating and drinking, a Horſe doth find pleaſure in this as much as you; and ſome unreaſonable Creatures herein do excel you. (5.) They are *empty*, and *unſatisfying* pleaſures: they do not fill, content, nor ſatiate them

that give themſelves moſt to follow after them.

To the wiſdom of the World.

IV. *Should not you be dead to, and take heed of reſting in the wiſdom of the World*; in the attainment onely of Humane Learning; after you have ſeen the Learned die as the Ignorant; and the Wiſe Man as the Fool: Humane Learning is more deſirable than Riches and Honours, and the Pleaſures of this World; but, yet it is not to be acquieſced in, without the knowledg of God in Chriſt. *Notions* in Learning will never deliver from the Torments of Hell: many *learned ſinners* have gone to eternal Miſery, and their torments there are greater than the torments of the Ignorant, and unlearned: the vanity of the wiſdom of this World, compared with the knowledge of Chriſt, appeares, in that

1. It cannot redreſs the ſinfulneſs of the *thoughts*, nor help againſt the vanity of the mind: The wiſe and learned Heathens became vain in their imaginations, *Rom.* 1. 21.

2. It doth not prevent ſinful *elections*, and choiſe of the will: Men of great knowledge chooſe the World, and Honours, and Eaſe, and Preferments before Chriſt.

3. It doth not remedy a ſinful *Converſation:* Many know things to be evil, and yet do them; and ſo is an aggravation of their ſin, and will be of their miſery.

4. It doth not ſeaſon Mens *communications*, nor prevent corrupt Diſcourſes; but makes them more

more witty, and able to scorn Godliness; jest with Scripture, and deride the Professors of the Gospel: But, the knowledge of Christ, it is (1.) the *sweetest* knowledge. (2.) It is the *surest* knowledg; being by the Revelation of the Spirit of God: (3.) It is *saving* knowledge: Thus take a true account of all the things; the *best*, the most *excellent*, the most *desirable* things in this world; and you will see no reason why you should *wholly* spend the residue of that time, which God hath lent you from the Grave, in such an eager pursuit of any thing of this life.

SECTION II.

BUt, that you may know, whether you (yet living) are dead to the things of this world, I shall give you this general Character, *viz.*

If you carry your self towards the world, as those that are dead to God, do carry themselves towards God, then are you dead unto the world: and, this general is resolved into these particulars.

Signes of a Man that is dead to the world.

1. *Those that are dead to God, they see no real excellency in God and Christ*; but they see something more in the things of the world: they see more excellency in their Gold and Silver; in their Profits and Preferments; in their Pleasures and Delights: so, if you are dead to the world, you do not admire the Choicest and the Chiefest things that are therein; but, do see more real worth in God and Christ, and one dram of Grace; then

in all the *Mines* of the most precious things in Nature: and, in your *practical* judgment do account them but dung and dross in comparison of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord.

2. *Those that are dead to God, do make choice of the World, and the things thereof, before God*: The will, following the *ultimate* comparative, practical dictate of the understanding, in wicked Men, doth choose Earthly things before God and Christ: For, though their *absolute* judgment might be for God, yet the *comparat* judgment (all circumstances considered) is for the world; and their will doth make choice of it accordingly: So, if you are dead to the world, you make choice of God for your *chiefest* good, and greatest happiness. For, though you may, in your *absolute* judgment, look upon the Things of the world, used with moderation, and kept in their proper place, as good; yet, in your *comparative* judgment (all circumstances considered) you do *ultimately* conclude, That God is better in himself and for you, yea, in both respects, and your will doth choose him accordingly.

3. *Those that are dead to God, though they may Pray to God, and talk of God, yet they do this as though they did it not: and Pray, as if they Prayed not*: God hath their *Tongues*, but, the world hath their *Hearts*. So, if you are dead to the world, though you may talk of the world, and Trade in the world, yet you do all this as if you did it not: You buy as if you possessed not; and you use this world as if you used it not: and, though the world

world may have your hands, yet God hath your heart.

4. *Thoſe that are dead to God, they are not troubled at the loſs of God, nor rejoyce at the tidings how they may have the enjoyment of him*; So if you are dead to the World, you are not *chiefly* troubled at the loſs of theſe things, nor count it ſo great matter of joy, if you have them and enjoy them. A man that is dead to God deſireth the world, and let who will look after God: So a man dead to the world, deſireth God, and let who will look after the World as his *portion*, and his *chiefeſt* happineſs, he will not.

5. *A man that is dead towards God, is not reſtrained from ſin by Gods moſt terrible threatnings*; though God threaten him with eternal death and everlaſting damnation, with the loſs of heaven and eternal happineſs, if he perſiſt in his wickedneſs, and continue in ſin, yet fear of the puniſhment of *loſs*, nor of the puniſhment of *ſenſe*, will not awaken him to Converſion and through Reformation. So a man that is dead towards the World, all the threatnings of men, that he ſhall have inflicted upon him, divers penalties, loſs of goods, liberty, life, yet all this is not cogent to bring him in to a *courſe* of ſin, and to do wickedly.

6. *A man that is dead towards God, is not drawn nor allured with the precious and moſt glorious promiſes of God to do that which is good*; Though God promiſe him heaven and eternal happineſs, the pardon of ſin, and his favour, yet all this moves him not to come to Chriſt, nor forſake his ſins:

So

So a man that is dead to the world, all the offers, preferments, enticements of the world to allure him into ſin will not prevail, he is dead to theſe things; and offers and overtures of the greateſt things move not a dead man. Thus you may try whether you are dead to the world or no. You live in the world, even after ſuch a devouring *Peſtilence*, you cannot live anſwerably to this great mercy, except you be dead to the World.

DIRECTION VII.

Since you live, after this Plague, be dead to ſin, and be buried with Chriſt.

HAth God ſpared you in time of *Peſtilence*, *then now be dead to ſin, kill your ſin, and ſolemnize the funeral of your luſts*; becauſe you live after ſuch a judgment, ſuch a mercy doth oblige to the death and *burial* of ſin. You are not buried with others in their graves, but you ſhould be buried with Chriſt, *Rom.6.4. Therefore we are buried with him by Baptiſm into death, that like as Chriſt was raiſed from the dead by the glory of the Father, even ſo we alſo ſhould walk in newneſs of life.* Ver.6. *Knowing this that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of ſin might be deſtroyed, that henceforth we ſhould not ſerve ſin.* In which Scripture are ſet down theſe things. *viz.*

1. The

1. The parts of Sanctification, { Mortification, Vivification.

2. The cause of our Sanctification, *viz.* communion with Christ in his Death, Burial, and Resurrection.

3. The Testimony and Pledge of it, our Baptism.

4. The growth and progress of Mortification; we should aime at the total destruction of the body of sin, by the Crucifying, Destroying, and Burial of sin.

You have seen the *death* of thousands, and you have seen the *Burial* of thousands, to all these add *one more Funeral*, and that is the Funeral of your sins. Do you out-live this Judgment, and shall your sins do so too? God forbid. This would be to live altogether unanswerably to so great a mercy. You live, but your sins should be dead in you, and you unto your sins, *Rom.6.11. Likewise reckon ye also your selves to be dead indeed unto sin: but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.* Though you live, yet must you be buried.

Now Believers are buried in three respects:

Believers are buried in 3. respects.

1. In respect of their *good names*, as they are reproached by the wicked; The *throats* of the wicked are the *Sepulchres*, or burial places of the good names of Gods people; this is part of a Believers sufferings.

2. In respect of *Self-denial*. Believers must be no more taken with the things of this World (so far

far as to draw them from God) than a person dead and buried and lying in his grave.

3. In respect of the *Mortification* of sin, and these two last are our duty; and of this last I would speak a little, following the Metaphor, in which there is some difference, and some agreement in the burial of our sin, and in common burial.

---

2 Differences between the burial of our friends and our sins.

The difference in these Respects.

First, We bury our friends *weeping for their death*, desirous of their life, wishing, oh that this my Friend had not died; oh that I could have kept him in life: But we must bury our sin *rejoycing*, as those that are glad of its death; *Not weeping because sin is dead, but that it once did live.*

Secondly, We bury our Friends with *hopes that they shall rise again*, and live again: But we must bury our sins with hopes they shall never live more; never return to them more.

---

5 Resemblances.

The resemblance holds in these particulars:

1. The Burial of sin supposeth *the death of sin*; Never any man yet buried his sins alive: For while sin doth live, it is in the heart as in a *Throne*, and not as in a *Grave*.

2. The Burial of sin supposeth *the ceasing of the love of sin*, that we see not that beauty and comliness in sin, as we did when it was alive. A man that loves his Relation, while he lived, put him

him in his bosome, yet will not do so when he is dead; a man while he *loves* his sin, will never bury it.

3. The Burial of sin includeth *the removal of it out of our sight, and as much as may be out of our thoughts.* We love not to look upon *dead* friends, nor many times to think or talk of them, who while they lived were pleasing objects to our eyes, and the delightful matter of our discourse. While *Sarah* lived she was beautiful in *Abrahams* eyes, but when dead, he desired to have her removed out of his sight, *Gen.*23.4. *I am a stranger and a sojourner with you, give me possession of a burying place with you, that I may bury my dead out of my sight.* The presence of sin is a trouble to you when it is dead, and you would have it out of your sight; and this removal of sin, when dead and buried hath these three properties.

First, It is a *total* removal, the whole body of sin, and all the members of it are buried; Death might arise from the disease of some particular part, but burial covers all. He that makes a shew of the burial of sin, and yet keeps any in his heart as his *love* and *delight*, hath indeed buried no sin: For who doth so bury his friend as to keep any of his members in his house?

Secondly, It is a *voluntary* removal; when one is dead, we make it matter of our choice to have him buried: Yea, we look upon it as a sore evil and great annoyance to have burial denied to our dead friends: So it is your choice to bury your sins, and the thoughts of not having them buried is a great trouble to you. *Thirdly*,

Thirdly, It is a *perpetual* removal; we bury our friends so, that we would not have them taken up again and brought into our house: So you bury sin, never to have it brought back to live again in your heart. One that hath buried his sin doth earnestly desire it might be removed out of the sight of God, by free pardon; out of the sight of his own eyes, by the evidence of the pardon; and out of the sight of others, by leading a contrary Conversation.

4. The Burial of sin includes *the rotting of the old man in its grave*, the mouldring of it, and the daily wasting of it, as dead Corps buried in the earth do consume and wast daily. Though a body buried doth not presently *totally* consume: Many years after the burial, if the grave be opened, you may find the bones and the skull; the reliques of sin in the heart of a Child of God, are but as the bones and the skull, but the body of sin is destroyed.

5. The Burial of sin includes, *the loss of the power and authority that sin had in the heart while it was alive.* Though a man were never so potent while he lived, yet when he is dead and buried, he hath no more power nor jurisdiction. Though thy sin did sit as a Lord, and rule in thy soul while it lived, yet being dead and buried, its dominion ceaseth.

Now if you are buried with Christ, these things will be a comfort to you, *viz.*

1. Those that are buried with Christ *are most comely*

comely in the ſight of God; A man that is naturally dead and buried, is not ſo with us, but he that is ſpiritually dead to ſin, is beautiful in the eyes of God. Comfort to thoſe that are buried with Chriſt.

2. Thoſe that are buried with Chriſt *have converſe and Communion with God*; thoſe that are naturally dead have no more converſe with us, but a man hath no Communion with God, till he is buried with Chriſt.

3. Thoſe that are buried with Chriſt *are paſt the hurt of death*; As thoſe that are naturally dead have paſt through *all* that death can do unto them; if you are buried with Chriſt, though you muſt come under the *ſtroke* of death, yet the *ſting* of death is taken out.

4. Thoſe that are buried with Chriſt *ſhall be raiſed at the laſt day*, and ſhall for ever live with God and Chriſt, and with holy Angels and Saints in the Kingdom of God, *Rom.6.8: Now if we be dead with Chriſt, we believe that we ſhall alſo live with him.* Thus if you would live in ſome meaſure anſwerably to Gods mercy in preſerving of you from death and the grave, that you are not buried *yet* with others, you muſt die to ſin, and be buried with Chriſt.

DIRECT-

DIRECTION VIII.

Since you live after this Plague, walk in newneſs of life.

HAth God ſpared you in the time of *Plague*, that you yet remain among the Living? If you would improve this mercie, then *Live to God, and walk in newneſs of Life.* God hath not ſpared you that you ſhould live to your ſelf, or to the fleſh, or that you ſhould walk in your old courſes: But your duty is now to live to God, and to lead a new Converſation. God hath brought you to the borders of the grave, and to the very confines of another world, and ſhaked you over the grave, and hath recovered and reſtored you, and hath as it were given you a new life, by reprieving you from the gates of death when you were ſo near unto it, *Rom.*6.4. *That like as Chriſt was raiſed from the dead by the glory of the Father, ſo we ſhould walk in newneſs of life*; and the equipollent phraſes of this new life are,

To walk with, before, and after God.
To walk after the Spirit, *Rom.*8.1.
To ſerve God in newneſs of ſpirit, *Rom.*7.6.
To walk as children of light, *Eph.*5.8.
To walk in the waies of God, *Pſal.*119.3.
To walk circumſpectly, *Eph.*5.16.

That

That you may, being spared from the grave, lead a new life, I shall shew you

The signs or nature of it.
The excellencies or dignities of it.
The Impediments and hinderances of it.

SECT. I.

THe nature *of*, or that which is included *in*, newness of life, doth not consist in these things.

What newness of life doth not consist in.

1. It doth not consist in some *new notions*, or new speculations, which you had not before, a new light might be made in an old house. New speculations may consist with an old Conversation.

2. It doth not consist in a *newness of a bare resolution* to lead a new life; this is but in order to it, though, if it be real, it is a good step towards this walking.

3. It doth not consist in a *bare performance of some new duties* which you did not before; an old course of sin may consist with the external performance of some New Duties, as Praying, Reading, *&c.*

4. Nor in a *bare keeping of some new Company*; though this is to be desired, that many would forsake their old wicked Company; or if God hath taken thy wicked Companions away by death, thou wouldst not make choice of those that be as bad.

5. Not in *New discoursing of spiritual things*;

A man that was wont to ſwear, and reproach, and blaſpheme the name of God, might now talk of God with others, and yet not lead a new life.

6. Nor in *forbearing of many old ſins*, which before you lived in; you were drunkards before, but not now, I would more were ſo changed, but yet this comes ſhort of this newneſs of life; which doth include theſe things following.

I. In what conſiſteth newneſs of life.

To walk in newneſs of life, ſuppoſeth a *new ſaving knowledge*, a new ſight, and a new judgement of things. No man can lead this new life with his old judgment which was corrupt, judging that good which was evil, and that evil which was good, 1 *Pet.* 1. 14. *As obedient children, not faſhioning your ſelves according to the former luſts, in your Ignorance.* There muſt be a new ſight and new diſcoverie of theſe things:

1. Of God, and his Excellency.
2. Of Chriſt, and his Sufficiency.
3. Of Sin, and its Deformity.
4. Of the World, and its Vanity.
5. Of Grace, and its Neceſſity.
6. Of Heaven, and its Felicity.
7. Of Hell, and its extremity of Woe.

Till a man hath new eyes, and hath his underſtanding opened to ſee the nature of all theſe things, *otherwiſe* than he did before, he will not walk contrary to what he did before; if he ſee no more of Chriſt, nor in the Attributes of God, nor in Grace, he will ſtill ſlight all theſe and undervalue them; if he have the ſame admiring apprehen-

apprehensions of the World, and seeth as much beauty in (deformed) sin, he will love it still, and delight in it still. There must be new light, and new *saving* knowledge before there can be a new life.

To walk in newness of life, includes *newness of* II.
Principle; a man with his old Principle can never lead a new life. A man in old courses may live according to the Dictates of a natural conscience, according to old customes, but he that leads a new life must have a new Principle of love to God, a new Principle of true fear of God, he must have new strength from Christ, a new heart and new affections.

To walk in newness of life, includes the *vigo-* III.
rous actings of this new Principle, and living in the exercise of these new graces infused into the heart, in the exercise of new love to God, of new desires after Christ, of new sorrow for his sin, of new hatred to his sin. To walk is to exert a principle of motion into act.

To walk in newness of life, is to have a Con- IV.
versation filled *with new works*, and to have all things done according to the *Rule* of new obedience. His *old* work was to please the flesh, but his *new* work is to please God. His old work was chiefly to get riches and encrease therein, his new work is to get grace and more of it. His old work was to obey the commands of sin, his new work is to obey the commands of God.

To walk in newness of life. is to walk accord- V.
ing to the *new Rule*, not according to the practises and examples of wicked men, but according

to the rule of Gods Word, according to the example of Christ.

VI. To walk in newness of life is to live for *new ends*; his end is not now self-interest in the world, not his own estimation amongst men, not his preferment in this world; old ends are inconsistent with a new life: But *this* mans end is the glory of God; all the actions of his life are *ultimately* resolved into this, and all is, in subordination unto this: He trades for this end, that God may be glorified; he praies, and preacheth, he reads and studies, that God may be glorified.

VII. To walk in newness of life includes a *newness of objects*, about which he is conversant; such as keep their old course of life look no higher than worldly objects, the honours, and the pleasures and the profits of this world: But such as are risen with Christ, to walk in newness of life, have proposed to themselves new objects, things that are above; God, and Grace, and Heaven, things that are invisible to the eyes of carnal men.

VIII. To walk in newness of life, it is to walk *as Christ did after he was risen from the dead, i. e.* in our measure. Christ did not incumber himself with the things of this world, after his resurrection, he did not converse with the men of this world, neither must we use their company out of *choice*. Christ after his Resurrection waited for his Ascension into glory: So if we will walk in newness of life, we must have our conversation in heaven, and be continually expecting our dissolution and our translation into glory.

To

To walk in newneſs of life, it is to do all the actions of out life in a *new manner*; to do all religious duties, to pray, and to hear in a new manner. Before he prayed lukewarmly, and with a dull, and hard, and unbelieving heart, but now more fervently, more livelily; Though the matter of his duties might be the ſame, yet the manner is new. IX.

To walk in newneſs of life, is to be *making progreſs* in all theſe, walking is a progreſſive motion; it is to continue, and to perſevere in the waies of holineſs: Not to decline nor to go backwards, not to return or walk back again to old wickedneſs. X.

SECT. II.

THe excellency and dignity of a new life is very great, and for your greater encouragement to walk therein I ſhall inſtance in ſome of them. The excellencies of a new life.

1. A new life is a life according to the *New Covenant* which God hath made with fallen man. Men that walk in old ſinful courſes, continue the Covenant they have made with ſin and Satan: But a man that walketh in newneſs of life, is a man that hath entred into a New Covenant with God, *Ezek.* 36.26. *A new heart alſo will I give you, and a new ſpirit will I put into you; I will take away the ſtony heart out of your fleſh, and I will give you an heart of fleſh.* Ver. 27 *And I will put my Spirit within you, and cauſe you to walk in my ſtatutes, and*

ye shall keep my judgments, and do them; And to walk thus in Gods Statutes is to walk in newness of life.

2. A new life it is the most *rational life*. When the Prodigal left his old waies, and took up a new course, he is said to come to himself, *Luk.* 15.17. Men act most *unreasonably* when they act *wickedly*.

3. A new life is the *sweetest and most comfortable life*; There are sensual, carnal, brutish delights in the waies of sin, but there is much terrour and bitterness in a wicked course, always at the end of it. Such as lead a new life, they have experience of the comforts of the Spirit, of the joyes of the Holy Ghost. All these new waies (so called as opposed to his former waies, else the best way is the oldest way) are waies of pleasantness, and all these paths are peace.

4. A new life it is the *noblest life*, we then live according to the highest elevation that we are capable of in this life. Nay, it is a life nearest to the life of glory.

5. A new life is an *evidencing life*; it is an evidence of the great and glorious things that are brought to light by the Gospel, all full of delighting comfort. A new life (taking in all the particulars before set down, shewing the things included in it) is an evidence,

First, Of our Election; his new life is a fruit of Gods ancient love, *Eph.* 1.4.

Secondly, Of a new robe of righteousness put upon us for our justification.

Thirdly, Of Pardon of old sins.

Fourthly, Of our Union with Christ; we could not lead a new life, were we not engrafted into a new stock.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, Of the sincerity of our hearts, and the truth of grace.

Sixthly, Of our sure title to heaven, to the new *Jerusalem* that is above.

6. A new life is an *encouraging life*: it will be an encouragement to a man to go to God in his greatest straits; it will encourage a man with boldness to look death in the face when it comes.

7. It is the most *profitable life* to our selves and to others; we shall be giving to others a good example, if we lead new lives, whereby they may be drawn to an holy Imitation. A new heart you may have, and that may profit your self, but a new life will be profitable to others as well as to your self.

8. A new life is the *only life* that honours God, and that doth credit the Gospel, and the Profession that we make. To live in an old course of swearing, and lying, and Sabbath-breaking, is to dishonour God: but if you walk in newness of life, you will promote the great end for which you live, *i.e.* the glory of God; and the excellency of any thing is according to its suitableness and tendency to the attaining of a mans ultimate end, it is a new life that only glorifieth God, therefore a new life is the only excellent life.

9. He that leads a new life hath a *new guide* to direct him in his holy walk; the Spirit of God will be your guide to shew you the way that you ought to go: Though (to you) it may be a new way, yet you shall not lose your way, because the Spirit is your guide.

10. He that leads a new life is taken into *new relations*. God is now his Father, and the Son of

God is now his Lord, Head, Redeemer, Brother and all the people of God are now related to him in the bonds of grace. These things and many more may be said in commendation of the excellency of a new life: which appears to be so in the eyes of carnal men (who have walked after their old hearts) when they come to dye, that they then resolve if God would spare them, they would lead a new life.

SECT. III.

Hindrances of walking in newness of life.

THe hinderances of walking in newness of life are many, and very great, that it is not an easie thing for any man to lead this life.

1. The *Old Serpent* is a great enemy to this New life; he hath old stratagems, and old devices and snares to divert them out of this way.

2. The *Old Principle* of corruption remaining in our hearts is a great Impediment to this new life. It is working still in us, to walk in the old waies of pleasures and delights; the Old man within will still strive hard to hinder this New life without.

3. *Old sinful Company* will hinder you in your new manner of life; they will be tempting, and enticing, and perswading you, to come to your old games, and your old delights; It will be hard to live a new life amongst old sinful Companions.

4. *Slavish fear* of men is a great impediment of

ot walking in newness of life; it may be thou mightest displease thy Father, thy Master, the Friend upon whom thou dost much depend, if thou shouldest forsake thy old wicked life, and become a new Creature, and lead a new life, thou wouldest meet with new troubles; but, fear God, and his Vengeance more if thou walk int hy old course of sin, and keep thyold heart, then be filled with slavish fear of men, if they should deny their old favour, and friendship to thee, because thou walkest in newness of life.

5. *Flesh-pleasing*; and being too much overpowred by the sensitive appetite.

6. *Spiritual sloth*: For, a New Life hath many new difficult duties.

Thus, if you would improve this Mercy, *that God hath spared you*; you must live to God, and walk in newness of life.

DIRECTION IX.

Since you live after this Plague, keep upon your heart a sense of this Mercy.

HAth God spared you in time of so great *Contagion*; *Then keep upon your heart a constant sense of Gods distinguishing Providence, in his preservation of you.* Let not length of time (if God give it you) wear off the greatness of this his Mercy towards you; if you forget Gods goodness

goodneſs, you will not walk worthy of it: This was the ſin of the People of *Iſrael*, for whom God did ſuch great things, Pſal. 78. 10. *They kept not the Covenant of God: and refuſed to walk in his Law.* Verſ. 11. *And forgot his Works, and his Wonders that he had ſhewed them.* Pſal. 106. 21. *They forgot God their Saviour, which had done great things in Egypt.* God hath done great *wonders* for you, in preſerving of you in the valley of the ſhadow of death: God hath not given you over unto death; God hath not laid you in the Grave, where you would ſoon have been forgotten: do not you lay Gods Mercy, towards you, in the *grave* of oblivion; nor bury his mercy (of ſaving you alive) in forgetfulneſs: *David* laid a charge upon his Soul, that he ſhould not forget the benefits of the Lord towards him, *Pſal.* 103. 2.

Set down therefore, and Record your danger, what it was; Such a *Moneth* in ſuch a *Year* the *Plague* was nigh my dwelling; it came into my houſe, it took away ſo many of my Children and Servants, but God ſpared me: he took away the Wife, the Husband of my boſome, but God ſpared me; yea, it was upon my Body, ſo many Plague-Sores were running at once, and God delivered me from the Grave, and from the very jawes of death: and, will you forget this while you live?

That you may have, and keep a ſenſe of Gods mercy to you, in preſerving of you, conſider theſe few particulars.

1. Conſider

1. Consider you *had deserved the Plague*, and death by the Plague, as well as those that have fallen into their Graves thereby (and it may be more too) do not think that those that have died were greater sinners than you, Luke 13. 2. *And Jesus answered and said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered such things.* Vers. 3. *I tell you, nay, but except you repent, ye shall all likewise perish.* Vers. 4. *Or, those eighteen, upon whom the Tower of Siloam fell and slew them; think ye that they were sinners above all Men that dwelt in Jerusalem,* Vers. 5. *I tell you, nay, but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish:* Do you think, that those, whom the Plague hath slaughtered, that they were greater sinners then all that dwelt in *London*? Take heed of such conceptions: Or, if many have fallen in this judgment, that were of worser *Lives* than you; yet, none have fallen that had worser *Hearts* than you naturally have: Nay, have not your sins been capable of *greater* aggravations than the sins of many Drunkards, and Swearers, and prophane Persons, that did never sin against a God that pardoned their sins; that did never sin against *such love*, nor after *such experiences* of the working of Gods Spirit upon their hearts as you have had? Nay, consider, that you are not likely to do God that service, nor bring to God that Glory, that some of them might have done, that are now in their Graves, if God had spared them; and yet God hath lengthened out your life: Oh, what an Obligation should this be to you to remember Gods Mercy, that you had

Helpes to be sensible of the Mercy of life.

had Plague-deserving-sins, but yet you had not the Plague! that you have death-deserving-sins, and yet you are not dead!

2. Consider *you had a Body as liable to Infection* as many others had; There were such natural causes in your Body, that might have laid you in your Grave, if God had not prevented it: and, did not you suck in the same Aire as others did, yea, as others *breathed* out, and yet God hath kept you?

3. Consider you *had no better Preservatives, nor Cordials*, then many others had, that yet by the Plague are laid silent in the Grave, and are now resting in the dust; and others, that now are dead, used the same meanes as you did, and it may be more, and better too, and yet God denyed his blessing to the use of those meanes that were more probable to prevent Infection then yours were; by this you may be convinced, that it was the *hand* of God that hath preserved you: and therefore by this, you should be obliged to remember, and keep upon your heart a sense of Gods mercy towards you.

4. Consider *you have been in more visible danger*; and, when you were called, did venture further then many others did: some were more reserved

ſerved, and kept from Company more than you have done; being called to Duty, where Viſited Perſons have been, as to help them that were ſick of this Diſtemper, *&c.* and yet ſome that lived more retiredly, and kept themſelves more cloſe, were Viſited, and are dead, and yet you have eſcaped, this is the finger of Divine Providence, and will you let the ſenſe of this weare off from your heart?

---

5. Conſider that *you have been more weakly, and more infirme of Body* then many of them that the Plague hath removed: Many that were more likely to out-live you, are cut down before you: Many that were ſtrong, and of healthful conſtitutions, are laid in the Duſt; while you, (that have been waiting for your diſſolution many Moneths, or Years, becauſe of the infirmity of your Body, and the frequent diſtempers that have been upon you) are preſerved.

---

6. Conſider how great a Mercy your preſervation is, *not onely to your ſelf, but to thoſe to whom you are related*; You have many little Children, that are not able to help themſelves, nor to provide for themſelves; that in all likelihood would have been expoſed to hardſhips and to want, if God had taken you from them: They are ſharers in this Mercy of your Preſervation; and, the more are concerned in it, the greater the Mercy is; and, the deeper and more laſting ſenſe it ſhould

should make upon your heart: The thoughts of your Children did increase your feares and trouble, when you were in danger; and, should not the consideration of this, advance the greatness of the Mercy, of being continued to them.

DIRECTION X.

If you have fewer objects of love left you, love God so much the more.

HAth God spared you in time of *Pestilence*; when he hath taken away many of your own Relations, *then, the fewer objects you have for your love now, the stronger let your love be towards God then it was before:* Instead of murmuring against God, that you have lost those whom you did love; the greater let your love be to God, since you have not so many for to love. Love laid out upon many objects, is the weaker; but, love united, and spent upon one object, is the stronger: As those, that have but one *only* Son, love that more, then those that have more do love any; because their love is divided amongst them all: It may be God had too little of your love, and it was in offence, and griefe unto your God, that the Creature should have that love which was due unto himself; and therefore he hath cut off the Streames, that you may get nearer to the Fountain. Thy Relation had more of thy

thy affection then came unto his ſhare; and therefore, in ſtead of Murmuring, be more in loving of thy God; and this will be to live anſwerably to Gods Correcting, and Afflicting of thee, in the loſs of thy Relation, and to his Mercy in ſparing of thy ſelf: And, look what Relation it is that is taken from *thee*, *while thou* ſurviveſt; and get clearer evidences that God will be in ſtead of that Relation to thee, and be better to thee than that was: Haſt thou thy Husband removed by this Contagious Diſeaſe, now make out more to God, that he would be an Husband to thee? Haſt thou loſt thy Children, or thy onely Son; ſee more diligently, that God hath beſtowed his onely Son upon thee, and this will much ſatisfie, and quiet thy heart? Hath God done thee any wrong, if he hath taken *thy* onely Son *from* thee, and hath given *his* onely Son *to* thee. Thus, ſince you did ſurvive others that are taken from you, improve your Affliction, and your Mercy, in being advantaged in Spirituals; and, this will be to live in ſome meaſure anſwerably to Gods dealing with you.

DIRECTION XI.

Since you live, remember what were the actings of conſcience in time of danger, and live accordingly.

HAth God ſpared thee in time of *Plague*, *then ſee what it was that thy Conſcience did moſt accuſe thee, or commend thee for, when the Plague was nigh thy dwelling, or thou waſt in fear*

fear and danger, and order thy life accordingly: What ſin was it that thy Conſcience did reproach thee for, in a time of danger, and in feares of death? whether of omiſſion or commiſſion; publick or ſecret; of what nature ſoever it was: and let it be the deſign of thy heart, in the courſe of thy life, to mortifie that ſin, and keep it under; that thou carefully avoid the occaſions thereof: that, when death ſhall certainly come, and conſcience ſhall have no more occaſion, or juſt ground to reproach thee, thou mayeſt ſee, that God in mercy did prolong thy dayes, till thou hadſt got the victory over, and the pardon, and the evidence of the pardon of that ſin. What was it in thy feares, and when thou waſt in expectation of death, that Conſcience did approve in thee? it did then approve thy diligence in thy Family, go on in this ſtill; it did approve of thy ſtrickt and holy walking with God, go on in that which was good, and thy rightly inlightned Conſcience did commend in thee; and, this will be to live in ſome meaſure anſwerably to ſo great a mercy, as is Gods preſerving of you in a time of ſuch a waſting Plague.

DIRECT-

DIRECTION XII.

HAth God spared you in such a time of so great *Mortality* and *Contagion*, then *learn to trust your self, and all your Affairs with God for the time to come:* You have lived in time of danger, and have been in hazard of your life, and yet God hath preserved and kept you: God hath called some to abide in the City, because they could not remove their habitation without neglect of duty; for, where our duty lies and where our work is, that God calleth us unto; there we may trust God, though our danger be never so great; because, while we are in our duty, we are in our way, and God hath promised to keep us in *all our wayes* in time of Plague, *Psal.* 91.11. Many had opportunity of retiring into the Country, without neglect of duty, without running away from duty (those that went from their duty and work, which God expected they should there have done, have cause to be humbled for their slavish feares of death, and great distrust in God) and, the use of meanes, for preservation, is not inconsistent with trusting in God, but is supposed and included in it, else it is not trusting in God, but presumption; but many were obliged to abide upon the place, and God hath preserved you amongst them: Oh, what an obligation and encouragement

Since you live, after you have been in such danger, trust God for the future,

ment is this for you, for the time to come, to put your truſt in God, in the uſe of meanes, in a way of duty; and, the more you are able to commit your ſelf to God in future dangers, the more you do improve this Providence of God in preſerving of you.

But, becauſe we need all helps and ſupports for putting our truſt in God, I ſhall lay down ſome conſiderations to help you more and more to truſt in God; premiſing firſt the nature of it, that you may perceive what it is, that you are exhorted to, when perſwaded to truſt in God.

Deſcription of truſt.

Truſting *in God is a ſpecial fruit of faith and hope, whereby the ſoul looking upon God in Chriſt, through a Promiſe, is in ſome good meaſure freed from fretting feares, and cutting cares, about the removing or preventing of ſome evil, or the enjoying or procuring of that which is good.*

1. It is a fruit of *faith*; for therefore a Man truſteth in God, becauſe he believeth, and is perſwaded of the truth of what God ſaith, and believeth the performance of his promiſe, and ſo it is called *fiducia fidei.*

2. It is a fruit of *hope*; for therefore I truſt in God, becauſe I hope it ſhall be with me according to his Word: If I had no hope of this, I could not truſt in God, and ſo it is called *fiducia ſpei.*

3. This truſt hath God in Chriſt, through a Promiſe, for its object; We truſt in God, through Chriſt, eying the Promiſe: For, the Promiſe of God,

God, is the foundation of our truſt in God, and the Promiſe of God draws forth the hearts of his People to truſt in him, Pſal. 119. 42. — *I truſt in thy Word.*

4. The effect of this truſting in God is the quietation of the heart, and a freeing of the Soul (proportionably to the degree of his truſt) from fretting feares, and cutting cares about good and evil, to be avoided or procured, Pſal. 56. 3. *What time I am afraid I will truſt in thee.* Verſ. 4. *In God will I praiſe his Word; in God I have put my truſt, I will not fear what Fleſh can do unto me.*

The Arguments for the moving you to truſt in God, for the future, are ſuch as theſe:

1. Will not you truſt in God after ſuch rich and full experience that you have had of *Gods taking care for you*? Hath God cared for your life, and will not you truſt him for Food and Raiment? experience is a great ſupport for confidence in God, 2 Cor. 1. 10. *Who delivered us from ſo great a death, and doth deliver, in whom we truſt that he will yet deliver us.* When *David* had had experience of Gods delivering him from the Lion and the Bear, he truſted in God to deliver him from the hands of the uncircumciſed *Philiſtine*, 1 *Sam.* 17. 37. When thou haſt been in danger, God hath kept thee; and when thou haſt been in ſickneſs, God hath reſtored thee: and, if it be good for thee, he will do ſo again. 8 Arguments to truſt in God.

2. Will not you truſt in God that is *Allſufficient and Allmighty*, able to deliver you from any

evil, able to bestow upon you any thing that is good? He can remove your feares, and he can fill your desires: According to your perswasions of a Mans ability to help you (*cæteris paribus*) will your trust be in him, 2 Cor. 1.9. *For we had the sentence of death in our selves, that we should not trust in our selves, but in God which raiseth the dead.* That God that can raise the dead, may be trusted in any case or condition: *You have found him able.*

3. Will not you trust in God, that is *so willing* to do you good? you may acknowledge Gods all-sufficiency to be a support for your trusting in him, but, the doubts that you find in your Soul, whether God be willing to do you good, is a cause of your (too frequent) distrust in him: You must believe that God is a God of mercy, and ready to do for his People, whatsoever he seeth conduceth to his glory and their good: and, you may know his willingness by his promises, which are various, according to the condition that you are, or may be in: *You have found him willing*, and yet will you not trust him?

4. Will not you trust in a God, that is *faithfull* in all he saith? He declares his willingness to do you good, to supply your wants, to preserve you in dangers, by his promise: for, a *Promise of God is a declaration of his will, for the bestowing of some good thing upon his People through Christ*, and his *will* and *purpose* he will never change, and his Promise he will not suffer to faile: Will you trust a Man that is faithful to his word, and not God? especially after you *have found him faithful* in performing promise unto you.

5. Will

5. Will not you truſt in God that is *infinite* in Wiſdom, and knowes how to order all your affaires? when your condition is altogether intricate, and you know not how to winde your ſelf out of difficulties, then your wiſe God can do it, 2 Pet. 2. 9. *The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation.* ——And, will you not truſt a God that is able and willing, and faithful and wiſe? eſpecially after you have *experienced* all theſe in God, in the late dangers and feares of death that you have been in? or, ſhall theſe qualifications of power, willingneſs, faithfulneſs, and wiſdom in Men (in their meaſure) be a ground of your putting *civill* truſt in them; and, ſhall not all theſe, that be in God *without meaſure*, be a ground of your putting *Religious* truſt in him?

6. Will not you put your truſt in God, ſince it is *his due*, it belongs to him of right? it is a part of your Spiritual Homage which you owe to God: Religious truſt doth ſo belong to God, that it will be Idolatry to place it in any thing beſides, *Pſal.* 115. 7,8,9,10,11. It doth ſo properly and ſolely belong to God, that it is a *Periphraſis* of God to be the confidence of all the ends of the earth, *Pſal.* 65. 5. Give to God the things of God, and give to the Creatures no more than belongs unto them: You have nothing elſe to truſt to, you muſt not place *Religious* truſt in men; not in great Men and Nobles, *Pſal.* 118. 8, 9. nor in Riches, 1 *Tim.* 6. 17. not in Horſes and Chariots, *Pſal.* 207. not in your own Righteouſneſs and Religious duties, *Ezek.* 33. 13.

7. Will not you truſt in God who is ſo *nearly*

related to you? Men are apt to truſt too much in their earthly Friends and Relations: We put civil truſt and confidence in our neer Relations, becauſe of the affection that they bear unto us: Thus Children truſt to their Parents, and Wives in their Husbands, and one Friend in another; God is your Father, your Husband, and your Friend, and yet will you not put your truſt in him?

8. Will not you put your truſt in God for *ſmaller things*, ſince you truſt him for the greateſt? you truſt in God to deliver you from the torments of Hell; and, will not you truſt him to deliver you from farr leſſer evils? you truſt in him for Pardon, and for eternal life; and, will you not truſt in him for ſmaller matters? Will you truſt him with your Soul, and not with your Body? for Eternal Life, and, not for Temporal? would you truſt a Man for thouſands, and not for Pence? eſpecially, when the Providence of God extends to the ſmalleſt concernments of his children, even to an hair of their heads, *Mat.* 10. 30.

When muſt we put our truſt in God? In general I anſwer; At all times, Pſal. 62. 8. *Truſt in him at all times, ye People; pour out your hearts before him: God is a refuge for us.* In Particular, truſt in God,

Six ſpecial times to truſt in God.

1. In time of *Sickneſs* and Affliction upon your Body, Job 13. 15. *Though he ſlay me, yet will I truſt in him.*

2. In

2. In time of outward *Wants*; in the losse of all things, 1 *Sam.* 30.3, to 7. *Hag.* 3.17.

3. In time of *Desertion*; when you have not the smiles of his Face, *Isa.* 50. 10.

4. At the hour of *death* commit your Soules to him; trust him with your Soul, *Psal.* 31. 5,6.

5. In times of greatest *inconstancy*, *Psal.* 46. 1, 2, 3.

6. In times of *Evil Tidings*, Psal. 112.7. *He shall not be afraid of evil tidings, his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord.* Thus, if you trust God more because of the experience you have had in Gods keeping of you, you do, in this, improve this Mercy.

DIRECTION XIII.

HAth God spared you in time of so great *Mortality*; *Then give thankes to God, and the Praises that are due unto him for so great Preservation*: Every Person should be very thankful unto God, that hath kept him alive; and every Family should sound forth his Praises: You spent time extraordinary, in seeking God by Prayer, in your Closet, in your Family, that he would preserve you; and, hath God done so, in answer to your Prayers? and, will you not spend some time extraordinary in, and

Since you live after this Plague, give thanks to God.

and with your own Family in thankful acknowledgments of Gods love unto you, and his care over you? Oh set some time apart, every Family whom God hath preserved, or so many that are left in every Family, in solemn praisings of God for his *signal* preservation vouchsafed unto you. In the time of your trouble, you called upon God, he hath delivered you, and now you should glorifie him, *Psal.*50.15. and God is glorified by you when you offer praises to him, *Ver.*23.

In the pressing you to the practice of this Direction, I shall do three things:

1. How, or with what, must those that are preserved from death in time of Plague give thanks to God, or glorifie God for this mercy?

2. With what Arguments should the people of God that are spared press themselves to give praises to God?

3. What course must such take to get a thankful heart for so great a mercy?

SECT. I.

3 Wayes you must Praise God with your Tongue.

HOw, or with *what*, must those that are preserved give thanks to God?

This must be done three waies:

1. You must praise God with your *tongues*: Your lips must shew forth his praises, *Psal.*51.15. Your tongue must sing aloud of Gods righteousness and mercy. For this end God hath preserved you, *Psal.* 30. 11. *Thou hast turned for me my mourning*

mourning into dancing: thou haſt put off my ſack-cloath, and girded me with gladneſs. Ver. 12. *To the end that my glory may ſing praiſe to thee, and not be ſilent: O Lord my God, I will give thanks unto thee for ever.* By [glory] *David* means his tongue; The Tongue is the glory of a man, it being his priviledge above all Creatures, with the tongue to form *articulate* words, having diſtinction of ſound, for the communicating of the conceptions of his mind unto others. Thus we ſhould praiſe God by ſpeaking of his excellencies and perfections of his nature, of his works and waies, of his dealings with us, of the danger he hath delivered us from, of the good he hath given to us, of the ſalvation he hath wrought for us.

2. You muſt praiſe God with your *heart* as well as with your tongue; for as prayer for mercy with the tongue, without the heart will not be profitable to *us*, ſo praiſes with the tongue for mercy received, without the heart, will not be acceptable unto God. *To praiſe God with the heart, is the very heart of our praiſes.* Thus *David*, that before called upon his tongue to bleſs God, doth alſo elſewhere call upon his ſoul to do it, *Pſal.* 103. 1. *Bleſs the Lord O my ſoul, and all that is within me, bleſs his holy name.* God bleſſeth us, by giving good things unto us, *Eph.* 1. 3. We bleſs God, when we do thankfully acknowledge the good things we receive from God. You muſt then ſtir up your ſoul, and all that is within you unto this great work of praiſe for ſo great Preſervation. Heart.

3. You muſt praiſe God in your *lives*, and by your Life.

your works and converſations; You muſt not only *ſpeak* Gods praiſes, but you muſt *live* to his praiſe; you muſt do it with *life*, and in and by your life. *Life* is the mercy I call upon you to praiſe God for, and you muſt do it by your life. You may praiſe God with your lips, and not with your hearts, but if you do indeed praiſe God with your heart, you will alſo do it by your life. If you will *give* thanks *indeed*, you muſt *live* thanks. The beſt *thanks-giving* is *thanks-doing*. Thus if you would be thankful for the life of your children, ſhew it by your religious care in their holy Education; That God might not ſay of you, I ſpared ſuch a mans Children in time of Plague, and afterwards he brought them up to diſhonour me, and to ſin againſt me; if you would be thankful for your own life, then lay it out in holy walking with God.

SECT. II.

12 Arguments to thankfulneſs for life.

WIth what Arguments ſhould the people of God urge their own hearts thus *in tongue*, in *heart and life*, to praiſe and glorifie God for his preſerving of them? Work your heart hereunto with theſe following Arguments. Conſider,

1. Should not you thus praiſe God for your preſervation from danger by the Plague, *Who did make this one of your Arguments to prevail with God by prayer in time of danger to preſerve you?* Did not you reaſon thus with God in time of ſickneſs? *Lord*

Lord lengthen out the life of thy ſervant, O Lord deliver my ſoul, O ſave me for thy mercies ſake, for in death there is no remembrance of thee; in the grave who ſhall give thee thanks? What profit is there in my blood, when I go down into the pit? Shall the duſt praiſe thee? Shall it declare thy truth? The grave cannot praiſe thee, death cannot celebrate thee: They that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth. The living, the living he ſhall praiſe thee. Were not theſe your *pleadings* at the throne of grace? And did not you promiſe to God, and purpoſe in your heart, that if God would ſpare you, you would celebrate his praiſes? And ſhall not there be a correſpondence betwixt your actions when you were in fears, and your actions, when your great danger (by the Plague) is over? Pſal. 6.4, 5. Pſal. 30.9. Iſa. 38.18, 19.

2. Should not you thus praiſe God for your preſervation, *Who have ſuch examples for your practice, recorded in the Scripture.* When *Hezekiah* had been ſick and was recovered he ſang forth the praiſes of the Lord, *Iſa.* 38.19,20. When *David* had been in danger of death and was delivered, he deliberates with himſelf what he ſhould return and render to the Lord, *Pſal.* 116. 12,13 &c. *What ſhall I render to the Lord, for all his benefits towards me? I will take the cup of Salvation, and will call upon the name of the Lord.* Ver. 17. *I will offer unto thee the ſacrifice of thankſgiving* —— For your imitation conſider *Davids* practice, (1.) He propounds a caſe of conſcience. Since I was brought low and the Lord hath helped me; ſince the ſorrows of death have compaſſed me about, and God hath delivered me, what

what shall I render? What must I do? What return must I make? And he presseth himself to this by four forcible **A**rguments, in these words, *for all his benefits towards me.* He considered,

First, *Benefits* received. Kindnesses call for acknowledgments; favours are obliging. We must give thanks in, and for afflictions, much more when we are delivered. I deserved judgments, but benefits have been my receipt.

Secondly, The *Author* of them, [His] benefits; The kindnesses of men should not be forgotten, much less the benefits of God. Your life is a benefit, and God is the Author of it.

Thirdly, The *Number* of them; [All] his benefits; they were many, not a few. Three things are innumerable:

{Gods mercies to us, / Our sins against God, / The evils that good men suffer,} *Psal.* 40. 5, 12.

Fourthly, The *Person to whom* they were given: For all his benefits to [me.] Hath God indeed given such mercy to me? Hath God continued life to me, so vile, so unworthy, Oh what shall I render? (2.) He resolves this case propounded; *I will take the Cup of salvation*; *I will offer the sacrifice of praise.* God hath taken from you (for the present) the *Cup of death*, which was to so many a *Cup of trembling*; he hath removed your *Cup of affliction*, and instead thereof hath given you a *Cup of Consolation*, and a cup running over with variety of mercies, and will not you take the *Cup of Salvation*, and offer the Sacrifice of praise?

Mat. 20. 22, 23. Jer. 16. 7. Psal. 16. 5.

praiſe? Do you ſee *David* (in the like caſe) ſo diligent and inquiſitive what to render, and ſo peremptory and reſolute, to offer praiſe to God, and will not you go and do likewiſe?

3. *Is not this the nobleſt work you can engage in, to praiſe God,* and to celebrate with thankfulneſs the greatneſs of his mercy and goodneſs? It is the work of Angels to be praiſing God; and when you take your flight into heaven, and are perfectly removed from ſin, ſorrow, ſuffering, temptation, wants, you ſhall do nothing elſe but love, and praiſe, and admire God? And will you not in the mean while accuſtome your ſelf to that work on earth, which ſhall be your imployment in heaven? And will you not take occaſion hereunto, by ſo great a mercy as God at ſuch a time as this hath vouchſafed you?

4. Is *not God moſt worthy of your higheſt and your heartieſt praiſes?* You were not worthy of Gods mercies, you were not worthy of life, but God is worthy of the beſt of your praiſes, were they as perfect as the *Hallelujahs* of the Saints in heaven. God indeed is above all praiſe, *Neh.*9.5. But yet he is pleaſed with his peoples praiſing of him.

5. *Will you praiſe the efficacy of your Antidotes, and the skill of your able Phyſitian,* by whoſe help you have been (under God) preſerved: And will you not be much more in praiſing of God, for your ſafety, when without his bleſſing all had been ineffectual? Will you praiſe the Inſtrument and means, and ſay, I had an *able Doctor,* and not the principal cauſe of your preſervation, and ſay, I had a *good God.* 6. Will

6. Will not you praise God for his mercy towards you, no, not for your life, *when this is all that God requireth at your hands*, that you should be thankful for your life, and thankfully improve it for his glory? You cannot make a *requital*, but God expecteth some *return*; you cannot make a *retaliation*, but God looketh for some *retribution*: And will not you think an alms ill bestowed upon that beggar, that will not give you thanks? And will not life be continued to the aggravation of your sin, if you are not thankful for it?

7. Is *not this a duty that will well become you?* A Christian doth then act most like a Christian when he is praising God, *in tongue, in heart, and life*, Psal.33.1,2. and 147.1. *Praise is comely for the upright.* Three things are very comely, To weep as a Sinner, to walk as a Saint, to rejoyce as a Son.

8. Will not you give to God the glory of his preserving providence, *when if you do not*, (that are Gods people) *none else will?* The wicked that are spared, they *will not*, they *cannot* praise God; they will dishonour him, they will speak to Gods dishonour, and act to Gods dishonour, so that if you do not praise God for his sparing so many alive, none else will: And shall God be without all thankful acknowledgments of his remembring mercy, in the midst of judgment? God forbid: That amongst all the thousands that are spared, there should be none found, making some thankful return to God. This number will be but small; amongst the *Ten* Lepers that were cleansed there was but one found thankful. If you would

would not have God to loſe the glory of his providence, then *you* muſt be the men that muſt honour him for it. Many wicked men were not found *praying* to be preſerved, much leſs will they be found *praiſing*, when they are preſerved.

9. Have *you more cauſe to bleſs God for life than others have*, and yet will not you do it? Your life is more ſweet and comfortable to you, than the lives of wicked men are, or can be, foraſmuch as you have thoſe comforts with life, and that Communion with God in life, that wicked men have not: They live only a natural life, and have only the ſweetneſs of natural life, but you with this life have alſo the comforts of an higher life, and yet will not you bleſs God for it? They are delivered from the Grave for a while, but not from the wrath of God *too*; from the Grave, but not from the danger of hell *too*, but ſo are you: And have you ſo much cauſe to bleſs God for life, and will you want an heart to bleſs him?

10. *Is this the moſt effectual way to have life continued to you, and yet will not you do it?* To have life continued will be, to be thankful for it; elſe God (finding you unthankful) when the Plague is over, might commiſſion death by ſome other diſtemper, to take that from you, which you would not be thankful for.

11. *Is not life the ſweeteſt of all earthly mercies, and more to be prized, and yet will not you be thankfull to God for it that hath ſo ſignally continued it unto you? Skin for skin, and all that a man hath he*

he will give for his life: And yet will not you give thanks to God for life? What earthly thing will you be thankful for, and what mercy upon earth will you make returns to God for, if not for *life?*

12. *Do you finde unthankful Men placed amongst the greatest rank of sinners, and yet will you be unthankful?* Unthankful Persons are numbred among Blasphemers, Covetous, Disobedient to Parents, such as are without Natural affection; false Accusers, Despiters of those that are good, *&c.* 2 *Tim.* 3. 2, 3, 4. and, will you yet be unthankful, and that for your *Life?* Thus, by these considerations you should press your heart to give Praises to God for this so great Preservation.

SECTION III.

6 Helpes to thankfulness for life.

III. WHat is the course that those that remain, after this Judgment, should take, to be thankful to God, and to render Praises to him for the Preservation of themselves, and those of their Relations continued to them?

Take these Rules.

1. If you would render Thankes to God in Tongue, in Heart and Life, for this Mercy, then *get a right judgment of the worth and greatness of the Mercy*, that you, and some of yours are continued after this Visitation. Those that do not prize a Mercy, will never be thankful for it: What a Mercy is life to *you*, that are not yet

yet aſſured of the love of God? What a Mercy is life to *you*, that are not yet certain of the Salvation of your Soules? or, if you are ſure of Heaven, yet is life to you a great Mercy; that you have time to do the Works that God hath appointed you to do. Conſider alſo what a Mercy it is to have your Children continued, that you may yet Inſtruct them, and Pray for them; that you may ſee Chriſt formed in them before you or they do die.

2. If you would be thankful for life, and have an heart to render Praiſes to the Lord, for your own, and your Relations; conſider, *how uncomfortable your Life had been, had God continued you, and taken away your neereſt Relations*; *and, how uncomfortable your Life would have been, had God continued them onely, and taken you away from them*: You may conſider while you live, the Diſcomforts of your Relations, and the ſorrow of their hearts, if God had removed you by death; What an uncomfortable *widow* would your Wife (now) have been? what uncomfortable *Orphans* would your Children [now] have been! You have enough before you, and amongſt you, that are ſad Inſtances of this: Oh, conſider this, and it will be a meanes to make you thankful, and to give to God the Glory of your Preſervation.

3. *Retain in your memory the greatneſs of this Mercy*, when you have apprehended how great it is; a *forgetfull perſon will be an unthankful perſon*: When *David* would have his Soul to bleſs God for his Mercy, he layes a charge upon himſelf

ſelf not to forget the Benefits he had received, *Pſal.* 103. 2. *Bleſs the Lord, oh my Soul, and forget not all his benefits:* Record Gods Mercy to you herein, and get it *imprinted* on the Table of your heart: forgetfulneſs is a great hinderance to every duty; as, ſome Men forget their ſins, and they will not be humbled for them: Some Men forget Gods Mercies, and they will not be thankful for them: ſome forget both, and are neither penitent nor thankful. So, to remember ſome things, and forget others, is very injurious to Mens Soules; as, Some remember Gods Mercy, and forget their ſins: and theſe preſume: Some remember their ſins, and forget Gods Mercy: and theſe deſpaire. But, it is beſt to remember both our ſins and Gods Mercy: the one will make us humble, and the other thankfull.

4. *Let the Relations that God hath continued unto you, have a roome in your heart and affection,* according to the meaſure that God commands: He that hath Children ſpared, and hath not ſutable affections for them, will not, cannot be thankful unto God for the continuance of their lives, and ſo Husbands and Wives: but, then you muſt love them, and your own life, but according to the meaſure that God allowes: For, to love any of theſe, your Relations, or your Life immoderately, will not be to be thankful for them, but to abuſe them, and make Idols of them: Let your own Life and your Relations have their allowance of your love, but no more.

5. *Pray*

5. *Pray to God for a Praising Thankful heart for this Mercy.* God gives us all our Mercies, and God must give us a Thankful heart for these Mercies, else we cannot give to God the glory of them: When you were in your danger you were afraid, least God should deny you life, when you Prayed unto him for it: but, are you as afraid, least you should not have an heart thankfully to improve it, when he hath granted it unto you? You Prayed for life, now Pray to God to make you thankful, and thankfully to improve it:

6. *Labour to keep your Graces lively and vigorous:* To Praise God is a lively Work, and a dull heart cannot do it: You must love God for his Mercy, if you would Praise him for his Mercy: You must delight in God, if you would Praise him: the more lively your graces are, the more sweet and comfortable your Life will be; and, the more comfort you have in life, the more your heart will be engaged to give God the glory of it: and so shall you be found amongst those few that do endeavour to live in some measure answerably to so great a Mercy, as Preservation from the grave, in a time of *Plague.*

FINIS.

October the 10. 1819

When this you see remember me
and keare me in your mind
that all the world may what
they will speak of me as your
fond